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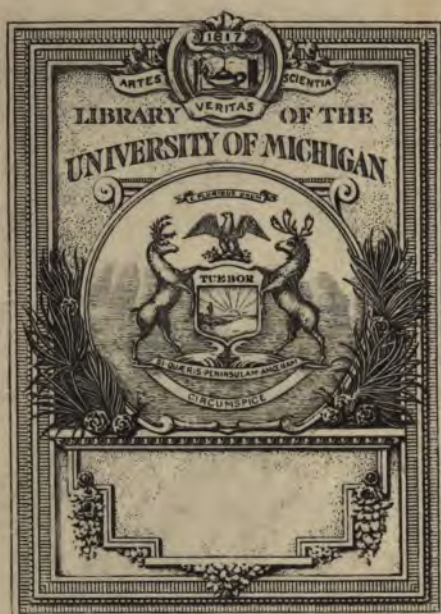
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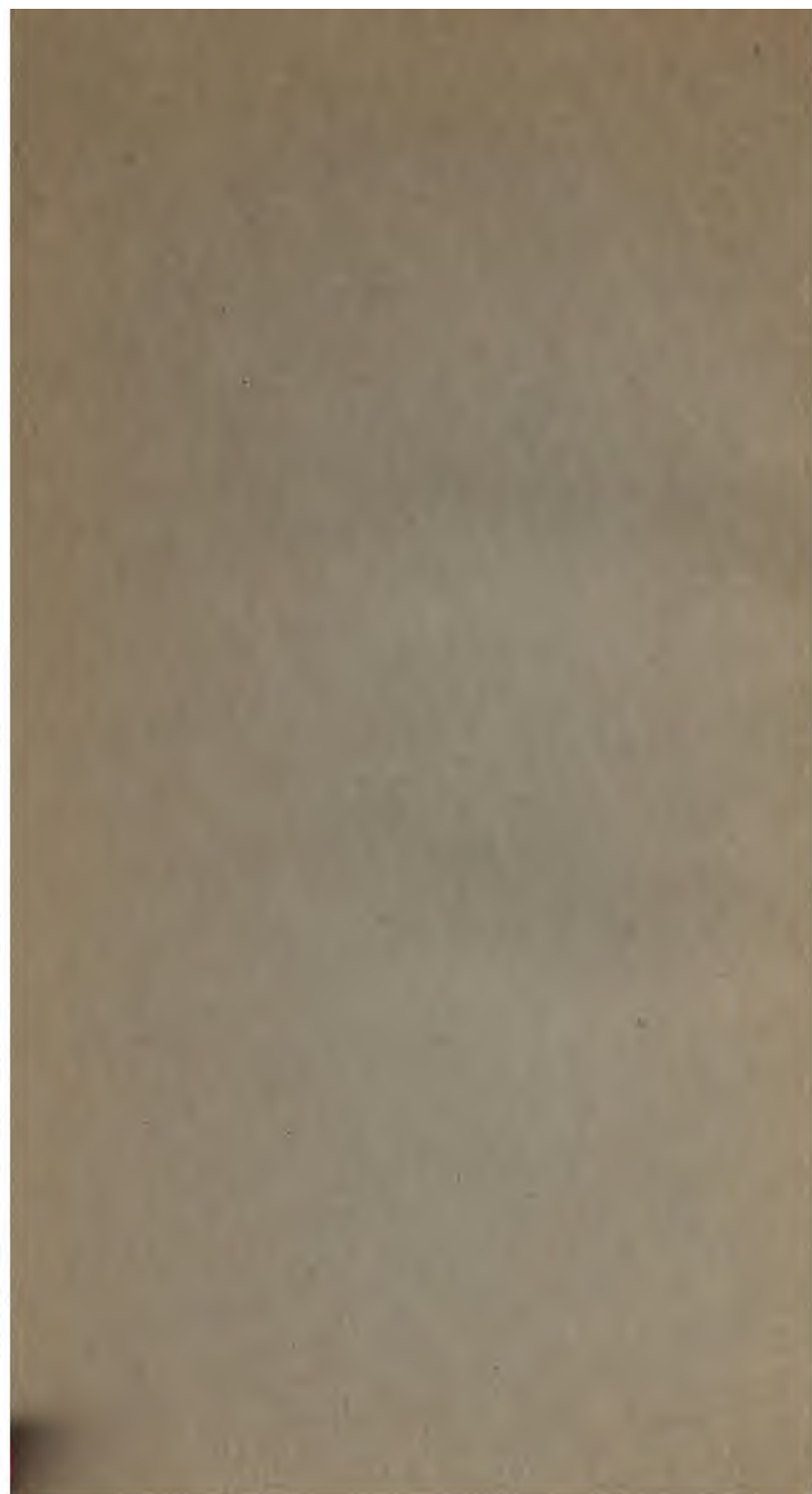
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Wm. M. 1848

THE
HISTORY
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES
OF THE
VOLUNTEER DELEGATES
OF
IRELAND,
ON THE SUBJECT OF A
PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

Containing the PLAN of PARLIAMENTARY REFORM,
the NAMES of the DELEGATES, and the STATE of
BOROUGH REPRESENTATION, &c. &c.

*Ireland Volunteer convention,
1783*

DUBLIN:

Printed by and for W. PORTER, No. 12, Skinner-Row;
And for P. BYRNE, No. 35, College-Green.

M,DCC,LXXXIV.

John F. Kelly

Adm. Secret. J. M. P. 184

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(Signature) John P. 1845.

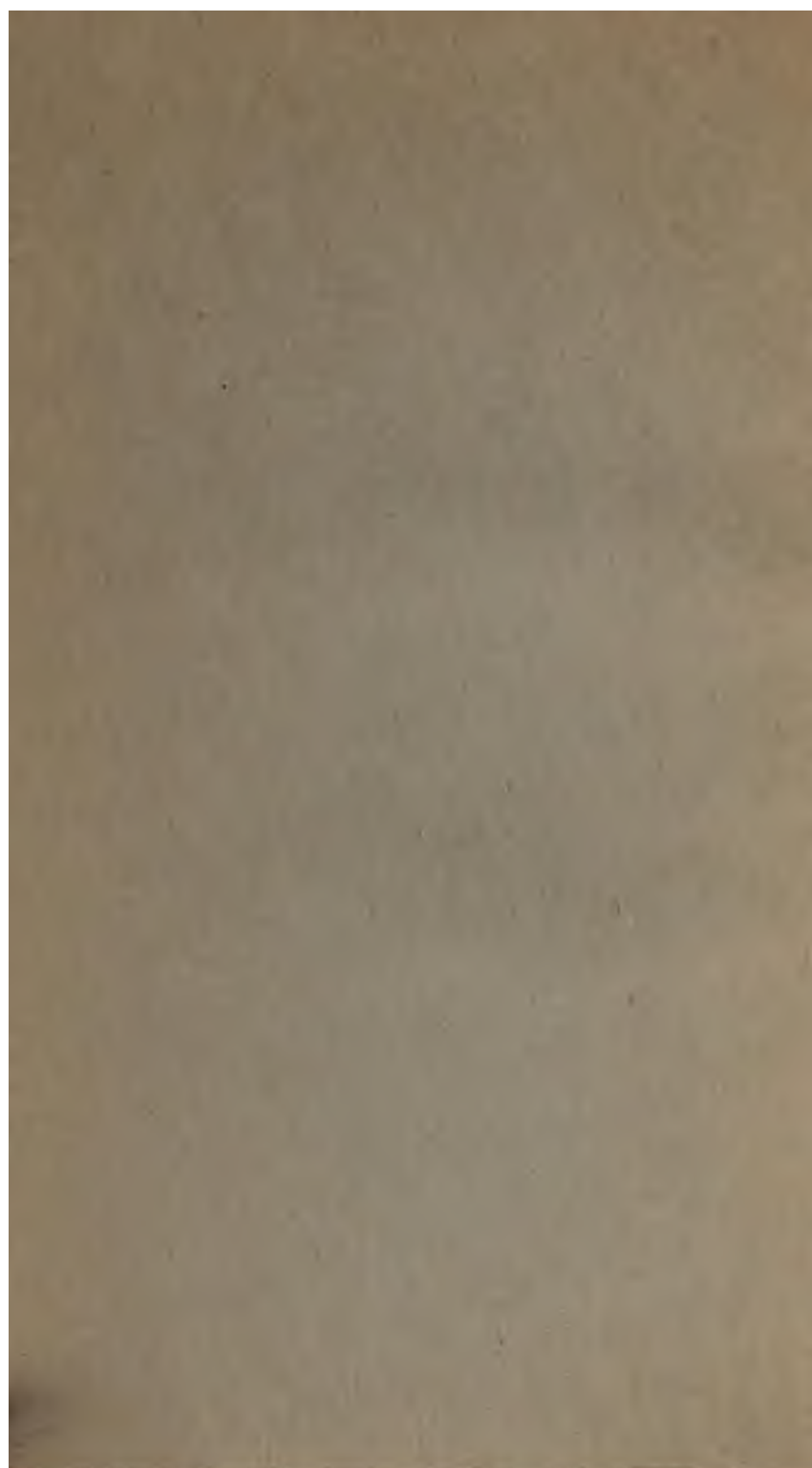
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John F. Kelly

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P R E F A C E.

BY the desire and wish of several respectable friends, we have been incited to attempt a History of the Proceedings of the late Assembly which has been denominated the CONVENTION. But neither the desires or wishes of our friends, nor the hopes of fame or profit could have had this effect, had we not stronger motives.

THE memorials of past events have hitherto, in general, been collected from the fugitive and evanescent pieces of the day, which curiosity has preserved through accident, or diligence selected with labour. The English historian has had, on this account, frequent occasion to thank the attention of Rushworth and D'Ewer, and other collectors of that stamp, for that industry which gave them new lights, and taught them to look to objects in different manners. In the party-historian of the moment, prejudice alone was to be acquired; his own passions being warmed, he only strives to heat the imaginations of his readers into a similar ardour. The springs of men's actions are not, at all times, to be developed by what they say, but a continued ardour in the Cause of Freedom cannot be easily assumed: He therefore who reads Anchitell

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P R E F A C E.

Grey's Debates will be better able to judge of the patriotism of men, than he who, contenting himself with the page of the historian, satisfies himself to behold things as Hume or Rapin describe them.

For those who wish to read things as they were transacted, the following collection is made. We do not pretend to discover the springs of actions; we only state what men said and did publicly; and we leave these to posterity to determine upon. We are too near to accuse men of any complexion with faction or corruption. Perhaps posterity may look up with reverence at the names in these pages, as men whose virtue had struggled for the restoration of the Constitution: Perhaps its researches shall be guided to another page, where they may admire the intrepidity of those who, disdainful of present fame, considered only the interest of future times, in sending down to them the Constitution unimpaired.

In any event, these sheets will not be without their utility: They mark the struggles which were made;—they point out the attempts which were withstood;—they are, as far as they go, the ground-work upon which a Parliamentary Reformation was attempted.—Whether

P R E A C E.

that was fair, full, and equal, we cannot determine.

IN this account of the transactions of the Convention, though we do not take upon us to say that we are verbally accurate, yet we can declare, that our assertions are substantially true. In these sheets, therefore, may be found every reason which had weight or seemed to carry conviction to the auditors ; and every debate as faithfully collected as diligence could procure. The Reader will not, however, be fatigued with those which were less important, perhaps useless. In this selection we have been assisted by men of learning and ability, some of whom stood high in the Convention, and are admired by the nation. It might, perhaps, be a matter of profit to the Bookseller, if he were at liberty to name them. As it is, the Book must stand or fall by its own utility or merits. It preserves records which shortly will no where else be to be found ; and it records names whose posterity will, it may be, think themselves illustrious, from their ancestors being numbered among the Delegates of the Volunteers of Ireland in the National Convention.



H I S T O R Y

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES

OF THE

VOLUNTEER DELEGATES.

ULSTER MEETING.

AT a meeting of Delegates from forty-five Companies of the Province of Ulster, assembled at Lisburn the 1st of July, 1783, in pursuance of a public requisition of the Ulster Regiment, viz. Southern Battalion of 1st Ulster Regiment; 1st Independent County Down Regiment; the Union Regiment; Ulster Regiment; Belfast 1st Volunteer Company; and Belfast Volunteer Company.

LIEUT. COL. SHARMAN in the Chair.

Resolved unanimously, *That a general Meeting of the Volunteer Delegates of the Province of Ulster, on the subject of A MORE EQUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE IN PARLIAMENT, is hereby earnestly entreated; to be held at Dungannon, on Monday, the 8th Day of September next.*

B

Resolved unanimously, *That the following Gentlemen (seven to be a quorum) be appointed a Committee of Correspondence for communicating with the other Corps of the Province, for taking preparatory steps to forward the intentions of this meeting, and for collecting the best authorities and information on the subject of a Parliamentary Reform, viz.*

<i>Lieut. Col. Sharman,</i>	<i>Col. Rowley,</i>
<i>Capt. Black,</i>	<i>Major John Crawford,</i>
<i>Dr. Alex. Crawford,</i>	<i>Lieut. Col. Banks,</i>
<i>Major Burden,</i>	<i>Mr. Robert Thompson,</i>
<i>Capt. Wad. Cunningham,</i>	<i>Capt. Thomas Prentice,</i>
<i>Revd. Mr. Craig,</i>	<i>Lieut. Tomb.</i>
<i>Dr. Samuel Moore,</i>	

Resolved unanimously, *That the following Address be published in the public prints :*

*To the VOLUNTEER ARMY of the PROVINCE of
ULSTER.*

FELLOW CITIZENS,

IN common with every class of Irishmen, you are sensible that this kingdom, for many centuries, might have continued to bear its chains in ignoble and indigent obscurity, had not an army of its citizens, by a great effort, dared to cast them off.

That the dignified conduct of that army lately restored to the Imperial crown of Ireland its original splendor, to nobility its antient privileges, and to the nation at large its inherent rights as a sovereign independent state ;—that by inculcating the glorious spirit of toleration, it has united the once distracted inhabitants of this country into an indissoluble mass ; and promoted the most exalted reverence for the laws,—are facts that will exhibit a splendid and interesting figure in the annals of the age.

From a military institution, so singular in its nature as to comprehend the several gradations of nobles, commoners, merchants, yeomen and mechanics, every substantial good will be expected by wise and virtuous men.

They will, with honest pride, behold in the state an unparalleled combination of the military with the civil character, existing only for the general interests of the community; and prepared, on the purest principles of the constitution, to give efficacy to the wishes of Three Millions of People.

The idea of a well-digested Parliamentary Reform, has ever experienced a favourable reception in the uncorrupted breasts of Irishmen and of Britons.—It has been uniformly looked up to as the true source of public virtue and of political salvation, by the first characters these kingdoms have produced. In this age, we have seen it warmly supported by that consummate statesman the late Earl of Chatham; and revived by the heir to his abilities and name, the present William Pitt. It has received the sanction of the most eminent and honest men in both Houses of the British Parliament; of a great number of the most respectable shires in England; of the Volunteer Delegates of the province of Munster; and, within these few days, of the unanimous Vote of thirty-eight Corps, reviewed at Belfast.

Among the many glorious effects of which a more equal Representation of the People in Parliament would be productive, the following are obvious:—The destruction of that party-spirit whose baneful influence has at all times been injurious to the public weal;—a revival of the native dignity of the crown, by imparting to each branch of the legislature its distinct and proportional weight;—and the abolition of that train of courtly mercenaries who must ever continue to prey on the vitals of public virtue, till, the balance of the constitution being restored, the necessity for governing by regular systems of seduction, shall no longer exist.

Then, would the constituent body regain its constitutional controul over its trustees,—and venal majorities would not be found to support the most dishonourable and pernicious measures, in opposition to the sense of the unpolituted part of the legislature, as well as contrary to the universal wishes of the public—and to the true intent of the institution of Parliaments.

With due deference for the august body which we have presumed to address—we therefore beg leave to express our

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With due deference for the august body which we have presumed to address—we therefore beg leave to express our

wishes that the Volunteer Delegates of Ulster would assemble with the same spirit of loyalty, patriotism, and firmness which actuated them on the memorable 15th of February, 1782 :—to deliberate on the most constitutional means of procuring A MORE EQUAL REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE IN THE PARLIAMENT OF IRELAND—as *the only measure* which can give permanency to the late renovation of our constitution, or restore that virtue to the representative body, without which, though the mere forms of a free government may be preserved, its spirit must inevitably perish.

Signed by order of the Meeting,

WM. SHARMAN, Chairman.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sharman having left the chair, and Lieutenant-Colonel Sir Walter Synnot taken it :

Resolved, *That the Thanks of this Meeting be given to our worthy Chairman, for his very proper conduct in the Chair.*

HENRY JOY, Junior, Secretary.

To the DUNGANNON DELEGATES.

The REPORT of a COMMITTEE of CORRESPONDENCE, appointed by forty-five Corps assembled by public Advertisement at Lisburn on the 1st July last, for the Purpose of obtaining Information on the important Subject of a more Equal Representation of the People in the Parliament of Ireland.

THE Committee, in discharge of the trust invested in them, immediately opened a correspondence with a number of the most eminent and well-informed characters in Great Britain and Ireland; and received answers fraught with most valuable information on the subject.

Such of them as enter minutely into the business will be submitted to the Provincial Assembly, if thought eligible, considering the length of their detail, and the great delay which their disclosure will unavoidably occasion. If it be more agreeable to the Meeting, for the general diffusal of

a Body of Knowledge on so great a political subject, the principal Letters will be published by the Committee's Secretary ;—by which means the dispatch necessary to so great an Assembly will be promoted.

The YORKSHIRE ASSOCIATION, so celebrated for its spirit and numbers, meet about the close of the present month ; in order previously to receive the decisions of this Province.

The SOCIETY for CONSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE in LONDON, in which are enrolled the names of the first characters in England, (strenuous labourers in the glorious business of Reform in our Sister Kingdom)—have ordered the Addresses of the Ulster Regiment, and of the forty-five Corps, convening the Provincial Meeting of Ulster, to be entered in their books, published in the prints, and circulated gratis through the kingdom, in order that the exertions of Ireland may give a spur to the spirit of the British nation.

The Committee is rejoiced to observe, that the English Letters are full of expressions of a high sense of the wisdom, spirit, and unanimity, that have characterized the Volunteer Army of Ireland : and that they all concur in conceiving the present to be the very moment in which a radical Parliamentary Reform can best be effected. They universally agree in the idea that the Delegates at Dungannon should enter into a very comprehensive view of the matter ; so as the principles of Reform may be strongly marked in their resolves :—receiving the sanction and concurrence of a general Convention of Delegates from the four Provinces—coincidence of sentiment in which, they hold to be *certainly of success*.

Founded on much deliberation, assisted by the best information they could procure, the Committee have ventured to prepare Resolutions, comprehending a general system of ideas on the subject, which they will take the liberty, through their Chairman, Lieut. Colonel Sharman, with much humility, to move in the august Body of Representatives of the Volunteer Army of Ulster.

The Committee of Correspondence have now only to apologize for their inability to so weighty a charge :—Happy if their labours shall meet the approbation of their

fellow-citizens; or tend in the most remote degree to any valuable purpose. They trust that the spirit of firmness and integrity which has already restored this ancient kingdom to her rank in the nations, will crown the 8th of September 1783, as a day which is to form the groundwork of *internal* emancipation, on a basis as great as that on which our rights as an independent nation, have been with such rapid success already established.

DUNGANNON MEETING.

ON Monday the 8th September, 1783, at half past twelve, the Committee of Correspondence having taken their places, the remaining Delegates, to the number of at least 500, from two hundred and seventy-two Corps of Volunteers, were admitted by tickets into the lower part of the Dissenting Meeting-house; an amazing crowd of ladies and gentlemen occupying the galleries.

Colonel James Stewart, with unanimous consent was called to the Chair, and who opened the business by reading the call of 45 corps met at Lisburn 1st of July last, and their Address to the Province, which had confined itself to the single point of a more equal Representation of the People in the Parliament of Ireland.

Before the business of the day was entered into, the Chairman read a letter from Lieutenant Colonel Francis Dobbs, claiming his seat as the Representative of a Volunteer Company. Before the question on his request was put, it was asserted that the Assembly of Volunteer Delegates, could not with propriety debate with any Fencible Officer.—And it was thereupon

Resolved, That the consideration of that letter be postponed till the second day of meeting.

This matter being carried with a shew of spirit and happy preface of Coincidence of opinion—Mr. Stewart, of Killymoon, a venerable old Gentleman, arose and with a tremulous voice, but expressive of fire, good

sense, and a heart warm with the glorious business of the day—urged the necessity of that assembly discovering in their conduct the most complete unanimity—as such a line of conduct must infallibly lead to success. The reverend figure from whom, and the manner in which this animated Address was delivered, were felt by every person present, and did not a little tend to promote the perfect union which characterised the glorious proceedings of the day.

The Committee of Correspondence, through their Chairman and Secretary, read a report of their proceedings, in which it appeared that they had opened a correspondence with a number of the first characters in England: and had received answers fraught with most important information—all of which expressed the utmost zeal and certainty of success, in the great undertaking.

It appeared also that the vast and populous county of York in England, that has made such noble struggles in a Parliamentary Reform, had, in consequence of the spirited conduct of Ulster and Munster, called a meeting for the close of the present month—in order that the zeal of the two kingdoms operating at the same time, may level every difficulty, and restore the representation of the people to that purity, without which, to use the words of the Ulster Address to the other three Provinces, *the unanimated forms of a free constitution would be a curse, and life cease to be a blessing.*

That the Society for Constitutional Knowledge, composed of the best, and some of the most illustrious characters in Britain, have published the Address of forty-five Corps to Ulster in the public prints, and circulated copies of it gratis over that extensive kingdom in order to excite a similar spirit to that which promises such glorious effects in this.

The report being closed, the Committee proceeded to lay before the Assembly a system of ideas on the subject of a Reform; and proposed them paragraph by paragraph—all of which were, with very few alterations in point of expression, unanimously carried.

The Bishop of *Derry*, who was a Delegate from the Derry Corps, made a very eminent figure in the debate—till seized with a gouty complaint, he was under the necessity of retiring. He first adjusted some historical facts relative to the early state of the Representation of the Commons after the Norman conquest, and exhibited admirable quickness and perspicuity: But in consequence of its being urged in the course of debate—that “the object of the meeting was a Reform of the Commons House of Parliament, the interference of the people was informal and unnecessary.” He delivered an animated and interesting oration. He avowed that he was not afraid to say that he preferred that Meeting as a faithful, honest, and spirited Representation of the People, to every other meeting or senate he was acquainted with in either kingdoms; and in the close of his speech he drew a very mortifying picture of the present state of the House of Lords. He declared the highest reverence for the Volunteers—their permanence and their objects; but defied the most spirited among them to point out a length for the service and dignity of this kingdom, to which he would not lead or follow. He concluded by saying, that he would rather have an opportunity of serving Ireland in the National Convention of Volunteer Delegates, or even in the very lowest of their committees, to any other mode of doing it in any other assembly.

His speech was received with universal and marked applause, soon after which he retired from the Meeting; being seized with a slight gouty complaint.

This Meeting, as far as property and rank constitute it, was the most splendid and great of any of the former ones.—There were present as Delegates, acting under the instructions of their Corps, fifteen Members of the New Parliament, besides several in the galleries.

Mr. *Flood* being deputed by the Belfast 1st Company, of which he is an honorary member, had travelled one hundred and twenty miles to attend in his place, and comply with the written orders of his Corps; but was stopped in

his progress by a violent gouty complaint, within a few miles of Dungannon.

The aggregate number of Volunteers represented at the meeting, was not less than *eighteen thousand*.

After the matter proposed by the Committee of Correspondence had been adopted, a member of the committee arose and read a motion in favour of a Bill of Rights, expounding the constitution of Ireland, in order, as it expressed, that Irishmen should not have to seek for an acknowledgment of their independency in the journals of a foreign state. In a spirited debate on the question, every speaker discovered a marked regard for a measure that from late transactions will naturally take place during the course of the ensuing session of Parliament—but objected to the use of its being then declared by a resolution of that Assembly; for the following reasons, viz. That the call of the meeting having limited the object to the single point of a more equal Representation of the Commons, their companies had therefore given no instructions on that head, and that they could not consistently act under that circumstance;—others alledged that it was already so generally the sense of the Volunteers, that a notice of it in that place were unnecessary:—but the leading feature of objection was, that were the Assembly to deviate in the smallest degree from the express words of the call—a door would be opened for the discussion of a multiplicity of inferior points, which could not be excluded but on that general principle of an exclusion of all matter, save the *one* object of the call. The motion was, on these grounds, very cheerfully withdrawn by the mover.

The meeting broke up after nine at night, the whole business being concluded; the following Resolutions having been unanimously entered into.

1. Resolved unanimously, *That freedom is the inalienable birth-right of Irishmen and Britons, derived from the author of their being; and of which no power on earth, much less a delegated power, hath a right to deprive them.*

2. Resolved unanimously, *That they only are free, who are governed by no laws but those to which they assent, either*

15. Resolved unanimously, *That we are decided in opinion that the Representatives of the People ought not in future to consent to ANY BILL OF SUPPLY for a longer term than TWELVE MONTHS : nor more than SIX MONTHS, until a complete redress of the aforesaid grievances be obtained.*

The following ADDRESS of the 1st Regiment of IRISH BRIGADE to the Chairman of this Association, on the 15th of Feb. 1782, being read :

To Colonel WILLIAM IRWINE, Chairman of the ULSTER VOLUNTEER DELEGATES assembled at Dungannon, Feb. 15th, 1782.

S I R,

I AM directed by the 1st Regiment of IRISH BRIGADE to acquaint you, that on the 22d day of last month, at a full meeting of that corps, they unanimously adopted the resolutions of the Ulster Delegates assembled at Dungannon, on Friday the 15th February last.

To that assembly, unprecedented in the annals of mankind, which is the glory of the present times, and must be the wonder of futurity, IRELAND OWES HER EMANCIPATION.

Toleration, the offspring of benevolence and wisdom, was no sooner adopted by that illustrious body, than received and cherished through the whole nation, and the inhabitants of Ireland from a DIVIDED became an UNITED PEOPLE.

You, Sir, and the highly respectable Body of which you are Chairman, will hear with pleasure of every accession of strength to the Volunteer Army: I am happy, therefore, to acquaint you, that this Regiment, though but four months embodied, is numerous and respectable; a circumstance sufficient to convince the world, that the public virtue of this kingdom daily increases, and that the glorious flame of *Liberty* blazes through the nation.

At this *great crisis* when the Western World, while laying the foundation of a rising empire, temptingly holds out a system of equal liberty to mankind, and waits with open arms to receive the emigrants from surrounding nations; we think it a duty we owe to our country, to promote, as far as our example can reach, an affectionate coalition of the inhabitants of Ireland. Animated by this sentiment, and convinced that national unanimity is the basis of national strength, this regiment affords a striking instance how far the Divine Spirit of Toleration can unite men of all religious descriptions in one great object, **THE SUPPORT OF A FREE CONSTITUTION.**

I have the honour to be, Sir,
with the highest respect,
your faithful and most
obedient servant,

JOHN SUTTON, President.

16. Resolved unanimously, *That this Association entertain the most grateful sense of the approbation of such liberal and patriotic men as compose that respectable Body; that we rejoice in the accession of their abilities to the common cause, and that we will be happy to co-operate with them in effecting the compleat liberty and happiness of the good people of this kingdom.*

19. Resolved unanimously, *That the following Address to the Volunteer Armies of the Provinces of Munster, Leinster and Connaught, be printed with these Resolutions.*

To the VOLUNTEER ARMIES of the Provinces of Munster, Leinster and Connaught.

FELLOW SUBJECTS,

THE transcendant events which our united efforts have produced, present an eminent instance of the protecting hand of Heaven;—whilst the progressive virtue and general union of the people, naturally prompt them to revive the spirit of an unrivalled constitution, and to vindicate the inherent rights of men.

The most important work yet remains :—which neglected, our past attainments are transitory, unsubstantial, insecure !—an extension to thousands of our beloved fellow-citizens of a franchise, comprehending *the very essence* of Liberty :—and drawing the line which precisely separates the *Freeman* from the *Slave*.

Suffer us, therefore, to conjure you by every endearing tie that connects man with man—with unceasing zeal to pursue one of the most glorious objects that ever agitated the human mind :—a restoration of virtue to a senate long unaccustomed to speak the voice of the people ;—a renovation of the ancient balance of our government ;—and a firm establishment of the first gifts on the ruins of an avowed corruption,—at once the bane of morals, and of liberty.

From a **GRAND NATIONAL CONVENTION**—distinguished by integrity, and inspired with the courageous spirit of the constitution—every blessing must result.

With one voice, then—*the voice of united millions*, let Ireland assert her *claim* to Freedom !

Through her four Provincial Assemblies let her temperate declarations flow to one common center ; and there, matured into an extensive Plan of Reform, be produced as the solemn act of **THE VOLUNTEER ARMY OF IRELAND** : as a demand of rights, robbed of which, the unanimated forms of a free government would be a curse ; and existence itself, cease to be a blessing.

Friends and Countrymen,

THE eyes of an enlightened world, are this instant upon us !—**MUNSTER** has, in part, already led the way : and millions of our fellow-subjects of Britain, in whom the flame of liberty still burns with lustre—behold with delight our exertions in the common cause ; and in our success, see the certain harbinger of their own.

Let the reflection that Greece, the seat of liberty and of science ; that Rome, the mistress of the world ; and that innumerable States, once flourishing and free, now lie prostrate by the hand of tyranny—*teach Ireland wisdom*. To our deliberative assemblies they convey awful warning to

They will, with honest pride, behold in the state an unparalleled combination of the military with the civil character, existing only for the general interests of the community; and prepared, on the purest principles of the constitution, to give efficacy to the wishes of Three Millions of People.

The idea of a well-digested Parliamentary Reform, has ever experienced a favourable reception in the uncorrupted breasts of Irishmen and of Britons.—It has been uniformly looked up to as the true source of public virtue and of political salvation, by the first characters these kingdoms have produced. In this age, we have seen it warmly supported by that consummate statesman the late Earl of Chatham; and revived by the heir to his abilities and name, the present William Pitt. It has received the sanction of the most eminent and honest men in both Houses of the British Parliament; of a great number of the most respectable shires in England; of the Volunteer Delegates of the province of Munster; and, within these few days, of the unanimous Vote of thirty-eight Corps, reviewed at Belfast.

Among the many glorious effects of which a more equal Representation of the People in Parliament would be productive, the following are obvious:—The destruction of that party-spirit whose baneful influence has at all times been injurious to the public weal;—a revival of the native dignity of the crown, by imparting to each branch of the legislature its distinct and proportional weight;—and the abolition of that train of courtly mercenaries who must ever continue to prey on the vitals of public virtue, till, the balance of the constitution being restored, the necessity for governing by regular systems of seduction, shall no longer exist.

Then, would the constituent body regain its constitutional controul over its trustees,—and venal majorities would not be found to support the most dishonourable and pernicious measures, in opposition to the sense of the unpoluted part of the legislature, as well as contrary to the universal wishes of the public—and to the true intent of the institution of Parliaments.

With due deference for the august body which we have presumed to address—we therefore beg leave to express our

22. Resolved unanimously, *That the particular Thank' of this Meeting be presented to Col. J. Stewart, for his very great propriety of conduct in the chair.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the Thanks of this Meeting be presented to our Secretary, Captain James Dawson, for his very particular attention and ability in the discharge of the duties of his laborious office of Secretary to the Volunteer Association of this province.*

ROBERT STEWART, Col. 1st }
Independent Co. Down Regt. } Chairman.

L E I N S T E R M E E T I N G.

IN consequence of the requisition contained in the foregoing resolutions and letters, a *Grand Provincial Meeting* of Delegates from the Volunteer Army of Leinster took place on Thursday October the 9th, at the Royal Exchange, Dublin.

About one hundred corps were represented, and the Earl of Charlemont having taken the Chair at about eleven o'clock in the forenoon, a Committee of Correspondence appointed at a late meeting at Drogheda, attended with their report; but being then and for some days before indisposed, he was at the instance of the Delegates prevailed upon to retire. General Ogle was then unanimously called to the Chair, and at twelve a procession of the Delegates commenced from the Exchange to the Great-Room or Guild-Hall in the Tholsel; the Volunteer Corps of the city and county of Dublin lining the streets, receiving them with presented arms, and paying them all due military honours.

On their arrival at the Tholsel, Major Gudgeon, Adjutant General, was ordered to return thanks to all the corps, and to dismiss them, save the Union Light Dragoons, who being entitled to a precedence of all those under arms, were retained as a guard during the sitting of the assembly.

The requisition for convening the meeting, also the resolutions of the Volunteer Delegates assembled at Drogheda, approving the same, and appointing a Committee of Correspondence, &c. being read, the report of said committee, signed by the Earl of Charlemont, was then produced by General Ogle, and was to the following effect:

That the present state of the Representation of this kingdom is inadequate to the promoting the general welfare of the people.

That we will concur with the Delegates who met at Dungannon, on Monday, the 8th of September last, and with our countrymen, in every constitutional measure which shall appear necessary to remedy such abuses, as endanger the rights of the Constituent Body.

The former of these two resolutions being moved and seconded, some objections were started thereto by Col. Hatton and others, when after a long debate it was amended to the following effect, and passed unanimously.

Resolved unanimously, *That the present state of the Representation of the people of this kingdom requires to be reformed.*

Colonel Hatton then expressed himself in favour of the Omnipotence of Parliament, as being fully and only competent to correct the abuses, if any could be deemed really to exist in the Constitution; and after advancing some opinions, which might be construed to militate against the authority of the people, to assemble or take cognizance of public grievances, he moved a resolution to the following effect: *That it is ONLY through the medium of the Legislature that we do hope for constitutional redress.* This brought on a debate, in the course of which it was urged, that the sacred Majesty of the People was in all times fully competent to correct the abuses which might arise in the Constitution, and to controul and direct that branch of the Legislature, to whom they had only delegated a power, but which interposition on the part of the people was allowed to be impolitic to exercise, save only on the most important occasions,

such as the present; and in support of this doctrine, the Secretary, Mr. Ashenhurst, urged the authority of the celebrated Doctor Jebb, and many other of the first characters in England, whose opinions he had been favoured with through the Chairman and Secretary of the Ulster Committee, and cautioned the meeting against the tendency of passing the resolution in its present form, and the inferences which might be drawn from it by the enemies of a Parliamentary Reform.

Counsellor *Michael Smith*, the Chairman of the Lawyer's Committee, on the inadequacy of a simple repeal, then arose, and after stating the importance of the meeting, the measure then to be agitated, the powers of the several branches of the legislature and of the people, and having fully declared that an amendment he intended to propose was not meant to interfere or militate against the power of the meeting, or of the people at large to discuss and adopt every proper means to effect a Reform in Parliament, amended Colonel Hatton's motion to the following effect: *That such reform can best and most constitutionally be attained through the medium of our legislature.*

It then passed unanimously.

The second resolution of the Committee of Correspondence was then moved, seconded, and passed unanimously.

It was then moved and carried, *That Delegates be appointed to represent such counties of this province as have given instructions and powers for that purpose to the Delegates of particular Corps*; and at near 7 o'clock in the evening the meeting adjourned 'till next morning at 11 o'clock.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1783.

The delegates having re-assembled, General Ogle was called to the chair at twelve o'clock, and after considerable debate relative to the mode and proper time of electing delegates, the following counties having chosen their delegates to the Grand National Convention, namely—Carlow, county of the city of Dublin, county of Dublin, county of the town of Drogheda, Lowth,

Meath and Wicklow, and the delegates present from all other counties having expressed their wishes to be indulged with a liberty of choosing theirs on their return to the country, the two following resolutions were carried:

Resolved unanimously; *That we earnestly desire that the Corps of such counties, as have not chosen delegates for the National Convention in November next, do assemble and choose five Delegates for each county, and do signify their choice to the Secretary of this meeting, before the 6th of November aforesaid.*

Resolved unanimously; *That we hope that the constituents of this province will call upon their Sheriffs to appoint meetings of their respective counties, in order to express their sentiments relative to a Parliamentary Reform.*

It was then resolved, that this assembly do approve of such delegates as have been this day elected for some of the counties, and that such election do receive the sanction of this assembly.

It was then agreed to, that the county of the town of Drogheda, and the county of the city of Kilkenny, have each of them a power of sending two Delegates to the National Convention.

Mr. Wills then moved, that a committee be appointed to receive, search for, and furnish materials for a plan of Parliamentary Reform.

A committee of nine being struck; any five of whom to be a quorum; and that all delegates in this assembly, who chuse to attend, have votes, and that it be an instruction to such committee to sit at 12 o'clock to-morrow, at the Royal Exchange.

This business being over, Mr. Burrowes (a delegate from the Irish Brigade) called the attention of the assembly to the rights of the Roman Catholics of this kingdom. He said he was instructed to move for and urge the extension of the election franchise to that respectable body of subjects; their behaviour had manifested their attachment to the Constitution—some power ought to be given them respecting a right to vote at Elections; how that right should be adjusted, they had not attempted to dictate, they had willingly resigned that

to the determination of the General Convention; but he was surprised to find some gentlemen averse to entering upon the subject; he was afraid an idea would go abroad that they were not to receive a power of voting for representatives in parliament; it would be an idea of the most fatal consequence, and gentlemen should consider that their resolutions on this important question would, in all probability, affect that assembly more nearly than it would even the Roman Catholics themselves; the people were now reduced, from the abuses in the Constitution, to return, at present, into almost a state of nature; this then was the time for the Roman Catholics to look for the attainment of election franchise; if they lost the present, they could not speedily expect so favourable an opportunity; was it then to be supposed that they would now be idle? No. He was sure a little would content them, but if they found that little was denied them by the Leinster Delegates, they would be led to form plans of their own; they would follow up those plans by petitions to the House of Commons, and the members of that house, who were disinclined to a reform, would take advantage of the disunion to destroy the measure. Was the right of election to be decided by numbers or by property? He was sure no man would come into the plan proposed by the Duke of Richmond—it would be giving the right of election to the mob. Was it property then was to be considered? The Roman Catholics had now a property in the kingdom, and a power of acquiring more: What then would be the consequence, should they be excluded of that franchise? In less than a century, by alienation of estates, the power of election would be confined to a few individuals, and the very evil, which rendered a reform now necessary, would again exist. Is it the wish of gentlemen that the intended reform should be permanent, or would they every century force us again into a state of nature, to remedy the very grievance which is this day complained of? He was confident persecution rather increased than diminished the number of Roman Catholics; it had done more harm than all the doctrine of the jesuits; and he would be

bold to say, that there would be more conformists, when the Protestant religion stood simply in the light of Christianity, founded upon reason, and supported by friendly intercourse and calm discussion. He then moved, that the assembly should come to the following resolution :

Resolved, *That the rights of suffrage ought to be extended to all those, and to none but those, who are likely to use it for the public good.* Which was agreed to unanimously.

Mr. *Burrowes* then moved, that the attachment to the rights of the Constitution, manifested by the Roman Catholics, merited some extension of the election franchise to that respectable body.

This met with some opposition from Col. *Hatton*, on the ground of several of the delegates then present not having instructions from their corps to vote upon any such question.

Colonel *Edgeworth* thought it improper, as a committee had been appointed to furnish materials for the National Convention, that possibly something of this kind would be included in those materials ; and that it would be indelicate for this assembly to dictate any measure to the great National Meeting ; for his part, while he admired the eloquence of the mover of the resolution, he was sorry to find fault with any thing he had urged ; but the gentleman had insinuated that there was cause to fear, if the resolution should not pass : he hoped every man there, however he acted from liberality of sentiment, would disdain to be actuated by FEAR : the idea hurt him, and he felt it.

Mr. *Burrowes* said, he was sorry the gentleman misunderstood him ; there was a fear which he was not ashamed to hold out to that assembly, it was a great, a glorious fear—the fear of making slaves of two millions of people—the fear of being defeated in an important measure—it was the fear of doing wrong.

Mr. *Fitzgerald* supported Mr. *Burrowes* : He said, the restraining laws which had formerly existed, were barbarous and impolitic, and every man whose ancestors had forged such galling and disgraceful chains, must inwardly blush at their being accessory to such measures. Shall we then, when seeking freedom, give liberty to one million

of subjects, and make slaves of two millions? The Roman Catholics of Ireland have manifested a firm attachment to the Constitution; they have tendered their lives in its support; scarce a Volunteer Corps but now admits them as members.—Has any evil ensued from this indulgence? Why then not give them a power of voting at elections? Have they behaved well while with arms in their hands, and are they to be dreaded when those arms are laid down? They seek not a liberty of electing Roman Catholics into Parliament, a right of voting for a Protestant is all they require; and can it signify, whether this or that Protestant gentleman is returned? they will be content, they will be satisfied, they will co-operate with us, and go hand in hand along with us. Religion is a matter between every man and his God: as long as there is nothing dangerous in it to the State, no man ought to be accountable for his tenets; and now, when liberality is diffused through all the Christian world, when Portugal has laid aside the inquisition, as a measure odious to human nature, shall the Leinster Delegates become a Protestant inquisition, and persecute men on account of their faith; let us not then, in God's name, make a partial reform, by giving freedom to one million, at the expence of two millions of slaves.

Major *McCarney* then proposed a resolution, which he believed would answer the purposes of those gentlemen who were not instructed upon this point, and which was:

Resolved, That a participation of election franchises to the Roman Catholics, is a measure of the highest importance, worthy the attention of the National Convention, and therefore referred to their consideration.

Mr. *Burrowes*, in hopes of unanimity, withdrew his former motion and adopted this; but before General *Ogle* would put the question, he begged leave to state the difficulty of his situation.

He was appointed a delegate by seventeen corps, not one of whom had been apprised upon this subject; he had, therefore, received no instructions relative thereto. No man despised pique, prejudice, or bigotry more than he; as an individual he would give his opinion for or against a measure without hesitation, and with spirit; but he was

not here to act as an individual: how then could he speak the sentiments of upwards of four thousand absent men, without their ever having considered the subject, or imparted to him their opinions; perhaps they might be of opinion, that this question ought not to be agitated at all; how then would he appear, if he gave the resolution his assent? He would ever hold himself bound by the directions of his constituents; they ever should govern his conduct; it was his duty, and nothing should warp him from it.

This drew up Mr. *Macquay* and Mr. *Wills*, who declared themselves in similar situations, and Colonel *Hayes*, Colonel *Westby*, Lord *Arran*, Lord *Aldborough*, Colonel *Stewart*, and several other gentlemen, urged the same.

Mr. *Smith* thought, as the business had been mentioned, something should be done. This was giving no determination; it was declaring the present meeting inadequate to discuss the point, and therefore referring to the National Convention its decision, it was only declaring it a matter of importance. Would any gentleman deny it? Some had said that the opinions of the people ought to be had; were the people to be convened at large to give that opinion, then the meeting of their delegates must be abroad in the fields. No, the volunteer delegates assembled in the National Convention would speak the opinions of the people; it was from them the general sense of the nation was to be obtained. This left the matter open for consideration; no man could be bound to decide upon it one way or other; it was only declared to be a matter of importance which ought to be referred; for his part, the force of the gentleman's arguments who had introduced the business, worked strongly upon him, and every fibre vibrated responsive to his language.

Mr. *Macquay* and several others however declaring that they would withdraw, as they did not think themselves authorised to vote on the occasion, and were unwilling to give it a negative, Mr. *Burrowes* declined insisting on having the question put, as he wished for unanimity in every thing; he however moved, that it should be an instruction to the committee who had been appointed to procure information of all the counties, towns and boroughs that re-

turned members into Parliament, their mode of election, and the number of the Protestant and Roman Catholic inhabitants in each; which was unanimously agreed to.

The usual thanks being voted to the Chairman and Secretary; General Ogle declared the high sense he had of the honour which they had conferred upon him; and that in every situation he hoped his public conduct would merit a continuance of their kindness. And the meeting adjourned till the first Monday in February, the Secretary having power to convene them sooner upon a requisition signed by thirteen delegates, giving due notice thereof, in order to receive a report from the National Delegates, of what progress they had made in effecting a renovation of the people's rights; by restoring to the constitution its original purity, in a more equal representation in Parliament.

CONNAUGHT MEETING.

AT a meeting of the delegates of forty Volunteer Corps of the Province of Connaught, at Ballinasloe, October 6, 1783.

Resolved unanimously, *That the resolutions of the Ulster Volunteer Association, entered into at Dungannon, the 8th of September last, be adopted by this meeting, and that we will persevere to the utmost of our power to obtain a Parliamentary Reform.*

Resolved unanimously, *That a Committee of five persons be chosen from each county to represent this province in the Grand National Convention, to be held at noon, in the Royal Exchange in Dublin, on the 10th day of November, to digest and publish a plan of Parliamentary Reform, to pursue such measures as to them may appear most likely to render it effectual, to adjourn from time to time and place to place, and convene Provincial Meetings, if found necessary.*

Resolved, *That in case any of the five delegates of any county shall by sickness, or otherwise, be prevented from*

from attending the National Convention, that delegates to be elected by the corps of the county shall be at liberty to choose another delegate to serve in his room.

Resolved, *That no volunteer in future shall be a delegate for more than one corps.*

CHARLES O'HARA, Col. Co. Sligo }
Light Horse, and Tyrerill Volunteers, } Chairmaⁿ.

JAMES JOYCE, Captain Clanricarde Infantry, } Secretary.

MUNSTER MEETING.

A MEETING of the Provincial Delegates for the Volunteers of Ulster was holden at Waterford, on Saturday the 1st of November 1783, when it was

Resolved unanimously, *That when abuse of representation has deprived the people of their share of the legislature, they have a right to demand of Parliament a Reform of such abuse, and to restore to the Constitution its true ballance and original purity.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the present state of the representation of this kingdom evinces such abuses.*

Resolved unanimously, *That in conformity to our Resolution of the first day of March last, and in concurrence with our brethren of Ulster, and the other provinces, whose zeal and ability have united in the common cause of Parliamentary Reform, the virtue and wisdom of Great Britain and Ireland, we will persevere in every constitutional exertion to obtain such redress.*

Resolved unanimously, *That we conceive the National Convention proposed by the Meeting of Dungannon, to be the best means of collecting the sense of the people, and carrying our resolutions into effect.*

Resolved unanimously, *That in our opinion, the sole object of the National Convention should be Parliamentary Reform.*

Resolved unanimously, *That no person whatsoever, who hath in or out of Parliament opposed a Declaration of Rights for this kingdom, shall be eligible to represent this province at the National Convention.*

Resolved unanimously, *That we do now proceed to make returns of five delegates from each county, and county of city in this province, to the National Convention, to be holden in Dublin on the 10th of November inst.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the trust committed to them do expire at our next Provincial Meeting, which we request the Committee of Correspondence to convene when occasion shall require.*

Resolved unanimously, *That such delegation may in any instance, and at any time be recalled, when the purposes of delegation are neglected or betrayed.*

Resolved unanimously, *That all elections of Delegates already made, or to be made, are, and shall be invalid, unless submitted to, and approved of by a Provincial Meeting.*

GRAND NATIONAL CONVENTION.

ON Monday the 10th of November, at about eleven o'clock, one hundred and sixty Delegates from the Volunteer Associations of this kingdom, having met at the Royal Exchange, they immediately proceeded to business, and elected the Right Honourable General Earl Charlemont, Chairman, and John Talbot Ashenhurst Esq; and Captain Dawson, Secretaries, during the meeting.

After some other arrangements it was resolved, *That each Delegate have two tickets, and that all Members of Parliament should be admitted without tickets.*

They then walked in procession through the ranks of the Volunteers of the city and county, who lined the streets, and received the delegates with presented arms and colours flying, and proceeded amidst the acclamations of many thousands of admiring spectators, to the Rotunda,

number of boroughs in their several provinces; also, a comparative account of the number of Roman Catholics and Protestants: those directions, he took for granted, had been complied with; for one, he had obeyed them. He therefore moved, That the several delegates should deliver in the fruits of their enquiries to-morrow, and that the Secretary be instructed to furnish every delegate with a fair copy of each for their perusal.

Colonel *Newport*. I object to this for several and substantial reasons. Every delegate was not instructed to this effect: the Roman Catholics, to whose number the principal enquiry was to go, have relinquished their claims for the present—a measure that whilst it tended to add considerable strength to the present meeting, redounded infinite honour on themselves! what use then would the reading those enquiries be of but to introduce a question which was not to be debated.

Lord *Farnham* declared that he had received no instructions whatsoever, nor had he ever heard that instructions were given to any delegate—was the motion therefore to pass, for one he could not comply with it, having no papers to produce.

Captain *Moore* was surprised to hear that any member of the assembly had neglected to possess himself of the information; the Dungannon resolutions had declared it necessary to enable each delegate to determine on a proper plan of reform.—However, to make the motion palatable, he moved, as an amendment, that all such members as were instructed to procure intelligence should produce it.

Captain *Fitzgerald*. I am really astonished at what I hear. We are come here to debate on a national grievance. How administer relief, unless we are informed as well of the occasion as the extent of the grievance?—unless we know the disorder, how cure the disease?—unless we know the number of boroughs, the species of election, and number of voters in each, in whom the election is—whose hands each county is in, and return of electors therein?—How tread on sure grounds?—I never was in Ulster, and therefore am ig-

norant of all those particulars, until those instructed for the purpose lay them before us; from my county I can furnish a tolerable accurate return of all those matters, as well as of the number of Roman Catholics and Protestants, which was a great task of no small labour: I have heard a great deal about the former having relinquished for the present all claim to a participation in the right of franchise—it has not come before us properly authenticated; of consequence not to be heeded. If the timidity of any one individual has made him relinquish his claims, yet surely it should not be considered as an act of the whole body.

Lord *Farnham*. I am called upon to reply to what dropt from the gentleman who spoke last. Had I received instructions I should have thought it my duty to have obeyed them.—Not having received any, I conceive I am not to blame in coming more unprepared than my brother delegates.

Mr. *Edgeworth* said, that at the Leinster Provincial Meeting instructions upon this point had been voted; and then read that part of the proceedings of the Leinster Meeting, and added, that as it was impossible to foresee who might be chosen Delegates to the Grand Convention, these instructions could not be delivered to individuals, it was sufficient to shew that they were published as they were in the paper in his hand.

Captain *Crawford* moved that the fourteenth resolution of the Dungannon Meeting be read.—It was declaratory, he said, of the wishes of that province; and, he supposed, had been adopted by the others. It expressly desired that each delegate should bring provincial returns with him.

Colonel *Hatton* said he would oppose the resolution because unnecessary; as he supposed every member came there fully informed. After having sifted every enquiry to the bottom, added to which, the papers that would of course be laid before the Convention, would, in his opinion, give as much knowledge as was necessary.

Captain *Moore* thought it would be better to have the instructions given by each province to its delegates laid

on the table; as that would fully explain how far those instructions have been complied with.

Earl of *Bristol* assured the Convention that they were on the verge of false ground—wished them to be cautious, lest they should tie up their hands against proceeding hereafter. A message had been delivered which could not be depended on: he declared it did not come properly authenticated, it did not speak the sentiments of the Roman Catholics of the nation, or even of this city, as there was to be a meeting of them this very night for the purpose of addressing the Convention. He thought it unnecessary at present to say more. The message might speak the sentiments of a few individuals—it did not speak that of the nation at large; it was not therefore to be relied on.

Captain *Neville* thought that the Roman Catholic business should not at present be meddled with, as the gentleman who had delivered the message was on a Committee of the House of Commons: from the respectable character, however, of the gentleman who delivered the message, he did suppose it might be considered as well-grounded, as he was sure his friend would not have introduced it otherwise: by referring the business at large to the committee, which was to meet to-morrow, every objection would be removed.

Counsellor *Blosset*. I have the honour of being a member of the most respectable Roman Catholic corps in this kingdom, therefore think myself particularly called on when I hear any thing mentioned intimating that body having waved their claim to an equal suffrage with their fellow subjects: In the county of Galway the number of Roman Catholics preponderate more than in any other county, and I assert that it is not their wish to remain in their unfranchised state; it is indeed not only their wish, but their determination to concur with their brethren of the established Church; and, if necessary, to relinquish rights they already possess, rather than sow the seeds of dissention in this assembly. We ought, however, to let in lights from all quarters on the business of Reform, particularly what relates to Papists; and what danger can possibly arise from such a mode of procedure, I am at

a loss to guests; as this meeting will always have it in its power to defer the consideration of any measure which may tend to disunite us;—but I do not see how disunion can be the necessary consequence of discussion;—nor do I think we shall proceed on liberal grounds, if we withhold discussion to avert disunion. This assembly is founded on the principles of the Dungannon Meeting—one of whose resolutions was—That each delegate should bring hither a comparative view of Protestants and Papists—mode of election in each county, number of boroughs, &c. Great pains were taken in the county town of Galway, to gain information on those points; I therefore most heartily concur with those gentlemen who spoke before me, that, although it may be prudent and proper to postpone the consideration of any particular part of this information, yet, that all delegates who had such return should lay it before the assembly; as it would surely be an extraordinary doctrine that this body shall not receive partial information, because general information is not to be had. In the province of Galway, as I already mentioned, there are more Roman Catholics than Protestants;—let the particulars of that laborious information lie silently on your table, for the private perusal of your members:—for the present seek no more.

Captain *O'Hara* rose to object to the meeting forming itself into a Committee; but was called to order, as speaking foreign to the question.

Captain *Bousfield* said it was impossible for every gentleman to get that information, let his wishes have been ever so sanguine.

Captain *Lyfter* thought the question before them might be postponed; was of opinion the meeting should immediately form itself into a committee, to take into consideration a Parliamentary Reform, to which subject their deliberations were confined by the instructions of their constituents.

Captain *Hackett* approved highly of the measure, a great deal of time had been taken up about the Roman Catholics, which he thought totally unnecessary, as the subject, he was sure, would not come before them; the message delivered this morning might be relied on, as well

from the respectability of the person who delivered it, as from the step itself, it being the most prudent and conciliating one the body could have taken, as it argues beyond a doubt the goodness of their intentions: he therefore thought every thing tending to that question should be deferred till to-morrow.

Colonel *Hayes* thought the resolutions which had been read yesterday should be disposed of, before they went into a committee; it was but a proper compliment to the gentleman that introduced them; besides, he thought they would form a proper ground-work—he was of opinion the message might be relied on, as the gentleman who introduced it was incapable of giving misinformation.

Captain *Moore* entreated the assembly to be cautious how they excluded themselves from any species of information, as no man could tell what questions might arise: besides such procedure might be made an improper use of by the enemies of a Parliamentary Reform.

Reverend Mr. *Bruce's* motion, with some amendments, agreed to.

Captain *Lyfter* thought Mr. Will's resolutions might as well come before the committee, but was over-ruled by the Chair.

Captain *Wills* confessed himself ever ready to accommodate any member, but was persuaded had gentlemen attended to him yesterday, they would have thought his string of resolutions a proper ground-work—a necessary preface to their business. Every gentleman must know that there were a variety of objections to the volunteer army interfering in political matters; that in a neighbouring kingdom the people considered us in open rebellion—that we will never be content till actually separated from Great Britain. (Here Mr. Wills was called to order.) He said he spoke the general opinion. There might be some few of a contrary way of thinking, but he was confident the general opinion made us actually in rebellion.

Colonel *Newport*. The Volunteer Army have more than once received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament for their conduct: he therefore did not think it

necessary now, to declare their sentiments. We ought not to make the reports of any insignificant individuals, a ground-work for entering on any extraneous matters.

Mr. *Wills* read his several resolutions, and

Captain *Bousfield* opposed them, because he was instructed not to debate on any subject but a Parliamentary Reform; besides, he thought the loyalty of the Irish so well known, it was not necessary now to declare it.

Colonel *Moffm.* Gentlemen should not be allowed to branch out into any matter foreign to a Parliamentary Reform—he thought, therefore, the resolution should be negatived, and in its room one substituted, declaring the necessity of a Parliamentary Reform.

Major *Crawford* read the 13th Dungannon resolution, which allowed the members of the Convention to pursue all such measures as shall be likely to carry into effect the great business of a National Reform. If, therefore, the resolutions before them should be thought likely to promote the success of a reform, gentlemen in his opinion were at liberty to agree to them; and thought them very proper to be adopted.

Colonel *Brownlow.* So confident am I of the loyalty of the nation at large, and this Convention in particular, that I think the resolutions before us perfectly unnecessary; but since they have been introduced, particularly the first, I think we ought not to throw cold water on them. A Parliamentary Reform has been determined by the voice of the nation to be a necessary measure; in consequence of that declaration we are now assembled to digest a proper plan—I think a committee the best place to discuss it, and hope no further time will be trifled away in unnecessary forms.

Reverend Mr. *Bruce* thought the resolution was founded on vague reports, to which that meeting should not add stability by taking notice of them; he besides was of opinion, that the resolutions were premature, and should not be entered into till the close of their business. The question of a Parliamentary Reform would necessarily produce a variety of questions, which if not regularly passed, would break in upon any system which might be proposed—he was therefore for deferring the resolutions till they would

come in of course, which he was certain would be the case.

Colonel Sir *E. Newenham*—I agree with the reverend delegate as to the necessity of adopting some regular system, but must observe that the rule of Parliament is to address our Sovereign before any business is introduced, to pave the way for his Majesty's assent to whatever bills shall pass the House during the session; I am therefore of opinion we should adopt that mode, or it will be damning at once the whole of our proceedings—and give Parliament an excuse for refusing our petition—which they wished to do.

Captain *Hackett* hoped the first resolution would pass unanimously—he did not see that it was so materially linked with the other resolutions, that it was necessary to agree to all or reject all; so far from it he would assent to the first, and give his dissent to the next.

Major *A. Stewart*, whilst he hoped it would pass unanimously, wished the step might prove without precedent, as it would mark in stronger terms their attachment to their Sovereign.

Mr. *Wills'* first resolution passed nem. con.

Captain *Lyffer* moved, that this Convention do form itself into a committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the business of a Parliamentary Reform.

Colonel *Messam* thought a resolution should be entered into, expressing that such a measure is necessary—before a committee could with propriety be formed to take it into consideration; it would make a necessary ground-work for them to proceed on.

Counsellor *Fitzgerald* said, the situation of the kingdom should come before some body of men, and should now be referred to a committee of that meeting. It was not their business to enquire whether a reform was necessary or not; they were sent there by those who thought such a reform necessary, and resolved that already.

Mr. *Messam* moved a resolution, that a Parliamentary Reform was necessary.

Lord *Valentia* did not rise with a desire of opposition, but that resolution was comprehended in a former proposition. He could not help observing, that too much time was

TUESDAY NOVEMBER 11, 1783.

Earl *Charlemont* having taken the Chair,

Mr. *Ogle* informed the Convention, that he had received a letter from a Roman Catholic Peer, expressive of the sentiments of the Roman Catholics in general; and that they had relinquished the idea of making any claims further than the religious liberty they already enjoyed, through the lenity and goodness of the legislature.

Mr. *Wills* said, that he intended to move his promised resolutions of yesterday. He could not think of relinquishing them, except they met the disapprobation of that meeting.

The Rev. Mr. *Bruce* said, he had a few necessary resolutions to submit to the meeting, which comprehended standing orders for its better regulation.

A delegate moved, That all Members of the Volunteer Corps of the city and county of Dublin, who on the former day lined the streets for the delegates, should be complimented with their free admission to that assembly.

Agreed to.

Mr. *Brownlow* thought the members of all other Corps of Volunteers equally entitled to the same compliment as those alluded to.

Mr. *Newport* called their attention to an affair of more consequence; the assembly was thin, and it shewed a remissness in the delegates who were absent, in not attending better to their duty. It was the only time, perhaps, that they could ever meet again. Every man, that heard him, (he said) must be sensible that they came there for the benefit of the nation; and his constituents should be informed of every member that absented himself from his charge. When the eyes, not only of the kingdom, but all Europe, were turned upon them, every person that betrays his trust should be held out in the light he deserves. He therefore moved, That each day, on the putting of the first question, the Secretary should call the roll, and mark down such Members as were absent, and such as attended in that assembly, and all ab-

sent Members to be published, on the day they neglected their duty. The question being put, it was carried unanimously.

A conversation arose between Lord *Valentia*, Mr. *Brounlow*, and Sir *Wm. G. Newcomen*, on the admission of Volunteers in general; but Mr. *Edgeworth* observed, that if they were admitted indiscriminately, the Members of both Houses of Parliament would find a difficulty in gaining seats; and it was of no small consequence, he said, that they should, in their own persons, be witnesses of that moderation, which he was sure would guide the conduct of that assembly. He was inclined to think, that twenty or fifty from every Corps might, in turn, be complimented, but certain inconveniences would attend the admission of the whole.

Colonel *Hayer* thought it highly proper that the convenience of the Lords and Commons should be attended to: he was sure it must be the wish of the Volunteers themselves.

Colonel *T. Fitzgerald* thought he had been deputed by his constituents to settle a great question, he was therefore surprized to hear so much time taken up with trifling ceremonials, of no consequence in themselves; he hoped, therefore, no further time would be spent in determining whether Volunteers, wearing white stockings and uniforms, should be admitted? that *momentous* matter had been yesterday disposed of:—as a Parliamentary Reform was the object of their meeting, he trusted it alone would be the subject of their discussion.

Mr. *Edgeworth* moved that the Secretary have directions to erect seats for the accommodation of the Members of both Houses of Parliament.

Colonel *Brounlow* opposed the motion on its principles; for however well inclined the Members of the Convention might be to admit the Members of both Houses of Parliament, yet the room was still supposed to be set apart for a Volunteer meeting; and that every stranger should come in on the same footing, *first come first served*.

After much debate, and a division, but the numbers not told, the question was withdrawn.

a loss to guests; as this meeting will always have it in its power to defer the consideration of any measure which may tend to disunite us;—but I do not see how disunion can be the necessary consequence of discussion;—nor do I think we shall proceed on liberal grounds, if we withhold discussion to avert disunion. This assembly is founded on the principles of the Dungannon Meeting—one of whose resolutions was—That each delegate should bring hither a comparative view of Protestants and Papists—mode of election in each county, number of boroughs, &c. Great pains were taken in the county town of Galway, to gain information on those points; I therefore most heartily concur with those gentlemen who spoke before me, that, although it may be prudent and proper to postpone the consideration of any particular part of this information, yet, that all delegates who had such return should lay it before the assembly; as it would surely be an extraordinary doctrine that this body shall not receive partial information, because general information is not to be had. In the province of Galway, as I already mentioned, there are more Roman Catholics than Protestants;—let the particulars of that laborious information lie silently on your table, for the private perusal of your members:—for the present seek no more.

Captain O'Hara rose to object to the meeting forming itself into a Committee; but was called to order, as speaking foreign to the question.

Captain Bousfield said it was impossible for every gentleman to get that information, let his wishes have been ever so sanguine.

Captain Lytler thought the question before them might be postponed; was of opinion the meeting should immediately form itself into a committee, to take into consideration a Parliamentary Reform, to which subject their deliberations were confined by the instructions of their constituents.

Captain Hackett approved highly of the measure, a great deal of time had been taken up about the Roman Catholics, which he thought totally unnecessary, as the subject, he was sure, would not come before them; the message delivered this morning might be relied on, as well

from the respectability of the person who delivered it, as from the step itself, it being the most prudent and conciliating one the body could have taken, as it argues beyond a doubt the goodness of their intentions: he therefore thought every thing tending to that question should be deferred till to-morrow.

Colonel *Hayes* thought the resolutions which had been read yesterday should be disposed of, before they went into a committee; it was but a proper compliment to the gentleman that introduced them; besides, he thought they would form a proper ground-work—he was of opinion the message might be relied on, as the gentleman who introduced it was incapable of giving misinformation.

Captain *Moore* entreated the assembly to be cautious how they excluded themselves from any species of information, as no man could tell what questions might arise: besides such procedure might be made an improper use of by the enemies of a Parliamentary Reform.

Reverend Mr. *Bruce's* motion, with some amendments, agreed to.

Captain *Lyster* thought Mr. Will's resolutions might as well come before the committee, but was over-ruled by the Chair.

Captain *Wills* confessed himself ever ready to accommodate any member, but was persuaded had gentlemen attended to him yesterday, they would have thought his string of resolutions a proper ground-work—a necessary preface to their business. Every gentleman must know that there were a variety of objections to the volunteer army interfering in political matters; that in a neighbouring kingdom the people considered us in open rebellion—that we will never be content till actually separated from Great Britain. (Here Mr. Wills was called to order.) He said he spoke the general opinion. There might be some few of a contrary way of thinking, but he was confident the general opinion made us actually in rebellion.

Colonel *Newport*. The Volunteer Army have more than once received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament for their conduct: he therefore did not think it

necessary now, to declare their sentiments. We ought not to make the reports of any insignificant individuals, a ground-work for entering on any extraneous matters.

Mr. *Wills* read his several resolutions, and

Captain *Bousfield* opposed them, because he was instructed not to debate on any subject but a Parliamentary Reform; besides, he thought the loyalty of the Irish so well known, it was not necessary now to declare it.

Colonel *Mossom*. Gentlemen should not be allowed to branch out into any matter foreign to a Parliamentary Reform—he thought, therefore, the resolution should be negatived, and in its room one substituted, declaring the necessity of a Parliamentary Reform.

Major *Crawford* read the 13th Dungannon resolution, which allowed the members of the Convention to pursue all such measures as shall be likely to carry into effect the great business of a National Reform. If, therefore, the resolutions before them should be thought likely to promote the success of a reform, gentlemen in his opinion were at liberty to agree to them; and thought them very proper to be adopted.

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Mr. *Mossom* moved a resolution, that a Parliamentary Reform was necessary.

Lord *Valentia* did not rise with a desire of opposition, but that resolution was comprehended in a former proposition. He could not help observing, that too much time was

John F. Kelly

wasted without coming to any determination. He wished for the talents of a Cicero or a Flood, to do the subject ample justice. He moved a resolution, That as it was the intention of that Convention to support the Crown, and the dignity of the nation, they were sorry to find that abuses had crept into Parliament, which required and ought to be reformed. He followed this with another, That such reformation should be effected through the medium of the legislature.

Mr. *Hackett* thought it better to say, Resolved, *That in conformity to the sense of our constituents, we think a Parliamentary Reform necessary.*

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Mr. *Hackett* thought it best not to form any specific plan in that body, but that a committee should be authorized to receive all plans, and then lay them before the general meeting; and their first measure should be to appoint such a committee.

Lord *Valentia* expressed his hopes, that they would be uniform in their proceedings; a committee was necessary, and he had a Right Hon. Gentleman in his eye, who was of all men the most proper to be the chairman of that committee, a man devoid of prejudice, whose honour and integrity, was the subject of his country's eulogium; whose name did not stand in need of any panegyric he could pronounce; his Lordship then moved, that a sub-committee be appointed, consisting of one member from each county; and that the Convention do also resolve itself into a general committee.

The Earl of *Bristol* observed, that forming themselves into a general committee, would give the sub-committee an opportunity of reporting their proceedings in the work of reform; he then proposed, that they should resolve themselves into a general committee, and proceed to give instruction for the forming of the other.

Counsellor *Blosset* said, he would move an amendment by address, in order to prepare a place of reform.

The Earl of *Bristol* explained, that after the sub-committee had formed a plan, they should then report, paragraph by paragraph, to the general committee.

Earl *Charlemont* put the resolution, *That it be an instruction to counties, to counties of cities and towns, to appoint each a member to form a committee, and their resolutions to be determined by a majority.*

The general committee having appointed the Right Honourable Lieutenant Colonel *William Brownlow* their Chairman, then sat, and nominated the following delegates to be of the sub-committee.

For ANTRIM, Lieut. Col. *Sharman*,
 ARMAGH, Right Hon. Sir *Capel Molyneaux*, Bart.
 CARRICKFERGUS, Rev. *William Bruce*,
 CAVAN, Capt. *Saunderson*,
 CARLOW, Col. *Bagenal*,
 CLARE, Major *Stackpole*,
 CORK, Col. *Roche*,
 CORK CITY, *Richard Fitton*, Esq;
 DONEGAL, Col. *Alexander Montgomery*,
 DOWN, Col. the Right Hon. *Robert Stewart*,
 DERRY, the Earl of *Bristol*,
 DUBLIN, Major *Verschoyle*,
 DUBLIN CITY, Col. Sir *Edward Newenham*,
 DROGHEDA, Col. *Meade Ogle*,
 FERMANAGH, Col. *Irwine*,
 GALWAY, Col. *D'Arcy*,
 GALWAY TOWN, Major *Broune*,
 KILDARE, Capt. *Neville*,
 KILKENNY, Major *Wemys*,
 KILKENNY CITY, Lieut. Col. *Mossom*,
 KING'S COUNTY, Col. *Darby*,
 KERRY, Col. *Herbert*,
 LONGFORD, R. L. *Edgeworth*, Esq;
 LOUTH, Lieut. Col. *Lee*,
 LIMERICK, Col. *Bourke*,
 LIMERICK CITY, Col. *Prendergast*,
 LEITRIM, Col. *Cullen*,
 MONAGHAN, Col. *Lucas*,
 MEATH, Capt. *Ruxton*,
 MAYO, Col. Sir *H. L. Blosse*, Bart.
 QUEEN'S COUNTY, Capt. *Stephens*,
 ROSCOMMON, Col. *Lyster*,

For SLIGO, Col. Right Hon. *Jos. Cooper*,
 TYRONE, Capt. *Eccles*,
 TIPPERARY, Major *Moore*,
 WESTMEATH, Capt. *John Lyons*,
 WEXFORD, Lord Viscount *Valentia*,
 WICKLOW, Col. *Saunders*,
 WATERFORD, *S. J. Newport*, Esq;
 WATERFORD CITY, Capt. *Carew*,

Who chose Col. the Right Hon. *Robert Stewart* their
 Chairman.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1783.

ABOUT eleven o'clock General Earl *Charlemont* took
 the chair.

Right Hon. *George Ogle* observed, that on the last day
 of meeting, he had the honour of presenting a message from
 a very respectable Roman Catholic Peer, relative to that de-
 scription of men, communicated to him through an honour-
 able friend (Sir Boyle Roche)—that the tendency and purport
 of said message had been greatly misrepresented—that we
 should act consistently—that the eyes, not only of this
 country, but of all Europe, were fixed on our proceedings;
 he then moved, that Sir Boyle Roche, Bart. have leave
 to explain his former message, and on the question being
 put, leave was given.

Sir Boyle said, “ that having heard that it was intended
 to be moved in that assembly, that the Roman Catholics
 should be admitted to a share in the legislature by a parti-
 cipation of the right of voting for Members of Parliament,
 he was come on the part of Lord Kenmare, and others of
 his particular friends, of the same persuasion, to disavow,
 on their part, any wish of being concerned in the business
 of elections; at the same time they desired to return thanks
 to those gentlemen who intended to have interested them-
 selves in their behalf; but fully sensible of the favours
 which had been already bestowed on them by Parliament,
 their only desire, at this time, was to enjoy them in peace,
 without seeking in the present distracted state of affairs,
 to raise jealousies, and farther embarrass the nation by
 asking for new ones.”

The foregoing declaration Sir Boyle declared he had offered for the press, but it was refused to be inserted.

Right Reverend Earl of *Bristol* said, he had a paper to submit to the consideration of the Convention, which was of the highest consequence, as it respected a class of men whose claims required the most serious attention; men who were deserving of enjoying every privilege in common with the rest of their fellow subjects. He need not mention that it was the Roman Catholics of Ireland, he alluded to; he then moved that the paper be read, which was to the following effect:

“ *November 11, 1783.*

“ At a meeting of the general committee of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, Sir Patrick Bellew, Bart. in the chair, it was unanimously resolved, that the message relating to us, delivered this morning to the National Convention, was totally unknown to and unauthorized by us.

“ That we do not so widely differ from the rest of mankind, as, by our own act, to prevent the removal of our shackles.

“ That we will receive with gratitude every indulgence that may be extended to us by the legislature, and are thankful to our benevolent countrymen for their generous efforts in our behalf.

“ Resolved, that Sir Patrick Bellew be requested to present the foregoing resolutions to the Earl of Bristol, as the act of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and entreat that his Lordship will be pleased to communicate them to the National Convention.”

Ordered to lie on the table.

It was moved that the paper produced by Sir Boyle Roche, Bart. be printed.

Right Reverend Earl of *Bristol*, also moved, that the resolutions, which he had presented, should be likewise printed.

Ordered accordingly.

Mr. *Ogle* complained that the press refused to correct the misrepresentation which was made of the message which he delivered on Tuesday, and warned printers against misrepresentations.

Mr. *Hackett* thought a particular paper should be appointed for communicating the proceedings of the Convention to the public—the kingdom was anxious to be acquainted with them: and they ought to be correctly published.

He then moved that the Dublin Evening Post should be appointed for that purpose.—Agreed to unanimously.

Counsellor *Morris* was of opinion that as these two papers militated against each other, they should be referred to the select committee.

Mr. *Bousfield* said, it was of the greatest consequence that these papers should be taken into consideration. Two millions of people look up to you for your intervention. The rights of nations, and of every man, are interested. The Roman Catholics are not to be compared to the Cappadocians, who prayed for slavery.

Counsellor *Morris*—The business we have assembled for, is of the greatest magnitude, and requires the fullest information that possibly can be had. The committee of the Munster Delegates had opened a correspondence with some of the most distinguished characters in either kingdom, for the purpose of getting information on a question that is to settle the constitution of this country, not for a day, but for ages. It was allowed that all the papers necessary on this head were not brought forward, and that though a select committee was appointed, yet every individual of that assembly, and he hoped they would attend to it, had a right to deliver his sentiments on the report of that committee. (He was called to order by the Earl of Bristol, who said there was no question before them.) He then moved, that the Chairman and Secretary of Correspondence for the Province of Ulster, do produce all such papers and information as they have received on the subject of a Parliamentary Reform, and that such papers do lie on the table.

Mr. *Hackett* was of opinion, that if the motion should be approved of, all the papers from the other provinces should also be produced; but he doubted the necessity of the motion.

Mr. *Newport* said, he was at a loss to discern for what purpose these papers were asked for; they were, he said,

already printed, and might be had in Dublin: he was against bringing forward any letters, except of consequence. Why overburthen this Convention with papers, if they can throw no new light on the subject?

Counsellor *Morris*—No delegate wishes more for a Parliamentary Reform than I do. It is for the purpose of information that I ask for these papers. A gentleman of great abilities has said, "Why should we overburthen this Convention with papers." We don't know the contents of them; if, on examination, they can be of use—receive them, if not—reject them.

Mr. *Hackett* observed, that much time had been already lost in debating trivial points; that business of importance was delayed; that an Honourable Member of the Committee of Correspondence had assured the House, that all papers, containing information, were published; that he should rest satisfied with that assurance, and object to the motion, which only tended to create difficulties, and was of no consequence.

Mr. *Alexander Stewart* said, the papers looked for were in the country, and could not be produced in many days.

Counsellor *Morris* withdrew his motion.

Mr. *Lyster*—All narrow policy should be banished from this assembly—we should act on a large and generous scale. Parliament has already opened its eyes to the sufferings and virtues of the Roman Catholics of Ireland—they are entitled to every privilege that the rest of their fellow-subjects enjoy—and I hope that the opinion of this Convention will be clear and decided in their favour. It will be, perhaps, in vain to look for unanimity, where so delicate a question as religion is concerned.—You must first discuss the question, and then decide upon it.

Mr. *Montgomery* observed, that the great object was a Parliamentary Reform; he wished that religion had not been mentioned; from the papers on the table there was a difference of opinion in the Roman Catholics on the subject. How can we decide, when they themselves are divided?

Major *Marcus Browne* said, that the Roman Catholics of the part of the kingdom where he lived looked for an extension of privilege; he would insist on a discussion; or, if the Convention thought more proper, to have it referred to the consideration of the committee.

Earl of *Bristol*—When we come to the question of religion, I will freely discuss it. I am not afraid to meet the question in any assembly, but in my opinion the present time is improper. I therefore move you to put the question of adjournment.

Right Honourable *Robert Stewart*—The information the committee has received from the Roman Catholics calls upon us to take up this question. I think, as chairman of the committee, we should discuss it at large, and not throw it on the committee to embarrass them.

Mr. *Bagenal* declared he had a letter from 'a gentleman of great weight and consequence among the Roman Catholics, by which it appeared, that body of men wished not to embarrass the present measures by any claims.

Mr. *Lyster*—I can by no means agree to the question of adjournment. What will you gain by adjourning to a short day? You talk of referring the consideration of this subject to a committee—the committee was appointed to expedite business—but the subject of religion they'll be afraid to meddle with—they'll not touch on that ground; if you will not discuss it now, you must decide upon it when you next meet; it will be the first business.

Mr. *Morres* said, that in his opinion a plan might be digested by the committee, and submitted to the Convention; for, pursuing liberty ourselves, why not extend it to every class of men that do not militate against the interest of this country.

Mr. *Newport*—Will you take upon you to decide where the parties themselves are not agreed? In his opinion, the Roman Catholics should come and pray for a right of suffrage. We should not hastily come to any resolution where there is any division among them.—
For the question of adjournment.

Mr. *Mossom*—I am for the question of adjournment, in order to give time to Roman Catholics to come to an ultimate determination.

Mr. *Hatton*, Mr. *Stevens* and Mr. *Ogle* for the adjournment.

Baron *Dillon* said, he had no instructions from that respectable body of men, but he had consulted with many of them—whatever extension of privileges may be granted them, he would answer for it, they would receive with the greatest gratitude, thankful for every advantage that has been granted them by Parliament, they hope to gain more by the generous interposition of their Protestant brethren in their behalf.

Mr. *Blosset* said, the Roman Catholics of that part of the kingdom where he lived, did wish for a right of suffrage—yet however ardent their wish on that head—would be sorry it should militate against the great work in contemplation—when a difference of opinion prevails, not only with the Members of this Convention, but also among the Roman Catholics themselves, will this self-created assembly (here there was a cry of no, no,) come heartily to a decision of such great magnitude? our proceedings should be carried on with temper and moderation, and that alone will procure unanimity, which will give weight and consequence to the resolutions of this respectable assembly. He was for the question of adjournment.

Mr. *Cullen* was going to speak, but not being in his uniform, would not be heard.

Mr. *Hackett* said, that the two papers delivered in did not militate against each other; that they seemed to him rather to coincide—one disclaimed expressly any interference by the Roman Catholics, and the other impliedly declined it, expressing their satisfaction with whatever may be done; ready indeed to receive any thing, to claim nothing: that if there was a difference between them, he would be inclined to give a preference to that which was introduced by the Right Honourable General, (Mr. *Ogle*) as it came through a noble Peer (Lord Kenmare) by whom the Roman Catholics at all

money, or other value, reward, or consideration to any person for having voted for me, or procured a vote for me or any other person at the late election. And I do further solemnly swear, that I will not suffer any person to hold any pension, or any place of profit under the crown, or accept of any sum of money in trust for me or for my use and benefit, or for the use and benefit of any of my family, whilst I shall serve as a Member of this Parliament.

And I do most solemnly and sincerely take this oath without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation whatsoever. So help me God."

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, That any person convicted of perjury by a jury, relative to the above oath, be rendered incapable of ever sitting in the House of Commons.*

After the resolutions were read,

Lord Valentia said, he did not entertain the smallest doubt of the Sub-committee having weighed with the greatest maturity the resolutions now produced; but as they were of great magnitude, and required no small deliberation, he thought that the taking into consideration the resolutions of the Sub-committee, should be postponed for a fortnight at least; until Monday next, and as printed copies of the resolutions were delivered into the hands of every delegate for that purpose, he moved,

That the Chairman should report some progress, ask leave to sit again, and that the Convention should be afterwards adjourned until Monday next.

He was seconded by Mr. O'Hara.

Mr. Warburton thought no time should be lost in bringing this business to an issue.

Colonel W. M. Ogle observed, that the resolutions of the Sub-committee had undergone a most ample discussion therein; that though they were of very high importance indeed, yet, he flattered himself, that the most of them would pass the Grand Committee, and afterwards the Convention, without debate or opposition, and that if the Committee would then go into the consideration of the report, all such might be passed, and such only as were opposed, be adjourned to a subsequent day.

Lord *Valentia* supported his opinion, that some time should be given for the consideration of these resolutions.

Mr. *Meade Ogle* said, no arguments have been made use of to prevent us going into the business now. At the very moment when we are called together to debate, the question of adjournment is moved for.

Mr. *Morris* was for postponing the consideration of the report to a future day, to enable every delegate to pay the subject that mature deliberation the importance of it required, and not to decide upon any part, as every delegate had not the same opportunity of obtaining that perfect information thereon as the Sub-committee, who had sat for so many days.

Mr. *Hackett* was in favour of reporting some progress, and leave to sit again, as he acknowledged that time should be given the members maturely to consider the several resolutions, but that gentlemen could do so by to-morrow, and not procrastinate until Monday.

Mr. *Mosses*—I declare, for my part, I would stay in town twelve months, in order to bring this business to a satisfactory issue; but why do we not go into the consideration of it now? Gentlemen say, that it requires more information and time to consider of these resolutions; but why did not those gentlemen attend the proceedings of the Sub-committee? The door of information was open to them. I like not this delay; I am satisfied it is not for the benefit of this country to delay any longer.

Mr. *Blisset*—We referred to the consideration of the Sub-committee, one of the most important objects that could engage the attention of this or any other assembly, and that is, a Reform of the Constitution. This report consists of eighteen articles, and every one of them of great moment; would he not be a foolish man, indeed, to build a house this day, and throw it down the next? I am totally unprepared to speak to any argument that may be brought forward, but not unprepared for the main object of the business. I would not discharge the duty I owe my constituents, if I did not take time for considering these resolutions. However great the abilities of the gentlemen who composed that committee were, and he was certain they were men of great abilities, will any man be

times communicated their sentiments to government or to the public. He appealed to gentlemen's recollection, whether that noble Lord's name had not always, with one or two more, been subscribed in the public papers, to whatever came from the Roman Catholic body? He thought the Earl of Bristol's motion for an adjournment should be put.

The Chairman of the Sub-Committee obtained leave to sit again 'till Friday.

Adjourned.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1783.

ABOUT eleven o'clock, General Lord Charlemont took the Chair.

Counsellor *Morris* said, that he had that day received the opinions and resolutions of the Roman Catholic Corps, and most respectable Roman Catholics of the city of Waterford; men whose property, character, and independent spirit placed them in a high point of view; and that they had mentioned to him their opinions entirely coincided with those resolutions of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, delivered to that assembly, the last day of their meeting, by the Earl of Bristol.

Mr. *Hackett* hoped that gentlemen would proceed with some degree of regularity; the business of the day was to come on, and the question of the Roman Catholics was not before them.

Mr. *Alcock* declared himself a friend to the wishes of the Roman Catholics. He had the honour of commanding two Corps, composed of Protestants and Roman Catholics, and their conduct and moderation entitled them to every privilege.

Earl of *Bristol* called to order. He moved that the roll be called over.

Mr. *Hackett* seconded the motion.

Roll called over.

The Earl then moved, that the defaulters be called over.—Called over accordingly.—On several gentlemen offering excuses for gentlemen who were absent,

Mr. Hackett moved, that every excuse be given on honour. It was astonishing, he said, that gentlemen should absent themselves on this business; he looked on the business of this assembly, as the business of the greatest importance.

The Convention then resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House, Mr. Brownlow in the Chair.

Mr. Stewart reported from the Sub-Committee, and moved that the resolutions of the Sub-Committee be now read. Resolutions are as follow :

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that no elector in any county, city, town, borough, or manor, within the kingdom of Ireland, be permitted to vote for any Representative in Parliament for said county, city, town, borough, or manor, so long as he may cease to be resident in said county, city, town, borough, or manor, unless his right of voting arises from landed property of twenty pounds per annum, within the said county, city, town, borough, or manor, as hereafter specified.*

Resolved unanimously, *That no elector shall be deemed a resident within any county, city, town, borough, or manor, unless he shall actually reside in said county, city, town, borough, or manor, for six months at the least in the twelve months previous to the day of the test of the writ, and unless the said county, city, town, borough, or manor, shall have been the usual place of his residence during the period of his registry.*

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every elector do register his qualification twelve months previous to the day of the test of the writ to entitle him to exercise his right of voting for Members to serve in Parliament.*

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that the sheriff of every county do appoint a deputy to take the poll in each barony, on the same day.*

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that all decayed, mean, and depopulated cities, towns, boroughs, or manors, which have hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, by an extension of franchise to the neighbouring barony or baronies, parish or parishes, be enabled to return Representatives agreeable to the principles of the constitution.*

Resolved, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every city, town, borough, or manor, which hath hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, be deemed to be decayed which doth not now contain within its present precincts, a number of electors, over and above potwolloppers, qualified to vote according to this plan, of not less than two hundred for the province of Leinster; and that whensoever any city, town, borough, or manor, shall so far fall into decay as not to furnish the aforesaid number respectively, that then the said city, town, borough, or manor, do cease to return Representatives till such time as the aforesaid number of electors be supplied.*

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every Protestant in any city, town, borough, or manor (not decayed) seised of a freehold within the precincts thereof, shall have a right to vote for Members to serve in Parliament for such city, town, borough or manor.*

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that all bye-laws made, or to be made, by any corporation to contract the right of franchise, be declared illegal by act of Parliament.*

Resolved, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every Protestant possessed of a leasehold interest in any city, town, borough, or manor, (not decayed) which hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, or within the precincts of the same, of the clear yearly value of ten pounds, which, at its original creation, was for thirty-one years, or upwards, and of which ten years are unexpired, as per registry, be entitled to vote in said city, town, borough, or manor.*

Resolved, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every Protestant possessed of a leasehold interest in any city, town, borough, or manor, (decayed) which hath hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, or within the precincts of the same, of the clear yearly value of five pounds, which at its original creation, was for thirty-one years or upwards, and of which ten years are unexpired, as per registry, be entitled to vote in said city, town, borough, or manor.*

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every freeholder of forty shillings per annum, and upwards, in any decayed city, town, borough, or manor, which hath hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, or with-*

in the precincts of the same, be entitled to vote in said city, town, borough, or manor, for electing Members to serve in Parliament.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that the duration of Parliaments ought not to exceed the term of three years.*

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that all suffrages be given viva voce, and not by ballot.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that any person accepting or holding a pension, directly or indirectly, other than for life or the term of twenty-one years, at the least, be rendered incapable of sitting in Parliament.*

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that any Member of the House of Commons holding a pension, directly or indirectly, for life or the term of twenty-one years, or upwards, do vacate his seat, but be capable of re-election.*

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that any Member of the House of Commons accepting any place of profit under the crown, do vacate his seat, but be capable of being re-elected.*

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that the following oath be administered to each Member of the House of Commons, and by him taken before he takes his seat :

“ I, A. B. of _____ do swear, that I have not by myself, nor have I by any other person for me, or at my desire or cost, or with my knowledge, consent, or approbation, give meat, drink, entertainment, or provision, employment, place, money, or other value, reward, or consideration, directly or indirectly, nor any obligation or promise for employment, place, or other value, reward or consideration, to any person or persons whomsoever, for any expences of any kind whatsoever they may have been at, to induce him or them to vote, or to forbear to vote for me or any other person, or to procure for me or any one else, the vote or interest of any person; and that I will never, directly or indirectly, fulfil any engagement or promise, entered into by any person whomsoever, relative to the giving any meat, drink, entertainment, or provision, employment, place,

found hardy enough to say, that they may not admit of amendment? I am sure there will not; therefore think that it would be highly proper to take two or three days time for the Convention to take a decided opinion.

Mr. *Montgomery* (of Cavan)—The present proceeding was an anticipation of debate, and he was therefore for reporting some progress, and leave to sit again.

Captain *Nevill* observed, that the present representation of boroughs was a matter of infinite consequence, and that something on that head ought to have been gone into.

Mr. *Brownlow*, Chairman, observed that there was not any thing of that nature contained in the report.

Colonels *Cullen* and *Hatton* rose to order, and the former was against any consideration of any part of the report till to-morrow.

Mr. *Brownlow* put the question, that I do now leave the chair, report and ask leave to sit again.—Agreed to.

The Convention was then resumed, Earl *Charlemont* in the chair.

Mr. *Brownlow* reported from the committee, that they had made some progress—and asked leave to sit again. Leave given.

Colonel *Meade Ogle* said, he had only made a proposition for considering such parts of the report, and deciding on them, as should be expected to pass without opposition; he would not pass any part, and therefore withdrew his wish of going into the business till to-morrow.

Colonel *Flood* observed, that a considerable debate had arisen in this meeting, as was often the case in other popular and great assemblies, where, in fact, there was not a real subject before them; he agreed perfectly in the idea of a very respectable gentleman near him (Colonel *Meade Ogle*) in not precipitating the business, but giving every part a most ample discussion: there was an idea he begged might well be considered, that was, any unnecessary or considerable delay of country gentlemen created, they might possibly stay in town. If it is admitted that you ought not to precipitate, you certainly ought not to delay, because the assembly may be decreased, and a depopulated assembly would not reflect credit on the pro-

ceedings; your committee ought to meet to-morrow, and your convention at large on Monday, to discuss the business at once, and avoid repeated debate. If the Grand Convention should be worried out by repeated procrastination, you will, in fact, become a depopulated assembly; and I am therefore for arguing the several resolutions in the committee to-morrow.

Mr. *Brownlow* was against procrastination; it was a subject of the very first importance, in which every man ought seriously to engage, and therefore moved to go into the consideration of it on to-morrow.

Colonel *O'Hara* adverted to the House of Commons, having sat three days on the subject of qualifications of electors without being able to decide on that point; he wished, therefore, that two days should be set apart for this business; he was against meeting to-morrow, and moved for Monday and Tuesday.

Lord *Farnham* said, he had attended to the resolutions since they were read, and as they were many and of very great consequence, he could wish for some time to consider seriously on them. Such mature deliberation would ultimately add to their weight. The gentlemen who formed the Sub-committee might think themselves sufficiently informed already; but matters appeared to him in those resolutions, which were certainly new, and of material consequence. The object of Triennial Parliaments was one of great magnitude, and the striking at boroughs another; the two days that intervened between that and Monday, were as little as could be allowed for this consideration.

Colonel *Cullen* was not for precipitating, but an enemy to delay; the arguments of the Hon. Gentleman near him (Colonel Flood) were, in his mind, decisive. Shall we create an unnecessary delay that will diminish our numbers, and retract from the respectability of the meeting? We shall have sufficient time for deliberation to-morrow with the committee, and afterwards to digest it fully on Sunday; the subject is of the first importance, and we have instances even of the House of Commons deliberating on the Lord's-day. It was true, upon any question of magnitude the corrupt disposition of the H—— of C——, led them

to create difficulties to the most virtuous propositions, which, he trusted, would not be the case here; principles of interest had prevailed in another assembly to procrastinate and impede the progress of the bill alluded to by an Honourable Gentleman (Mr. O'Hara) but he trusted, and was firmly persuaded, that nought but the public interest would manifest itself in this assembly.

Mr. *Browne* was surprised that gentlemen could require so long a time, when the doors were open for every member to have access to the Sub-committee. He had the honour of being one of that committee, and could not help thinking it extraordinary, if private avocations had prevented gentlemen from attending, that they should throw the want of information on any other pretext. The committee, indeed, were sensibly obliged to those who did give their assistance; but noblemen and gentlemen who were habituated to the mode of postponing the great national business in another place, had attempted to practice the same mode in that assembly. He, on his own part, was not acquainted with the delays of other places, and he thought the discussion of the matter to-morrow essentially necessary. They could not, like the place he alluded to, dispatch a serjeant at arms with a mace upon his shoulders, to enforce the attendance of their members. They had nothing to compel attendance in that Convention but the ardent zeal with which every man ought to burn in the cause of his country.

Mr. *Morris* said, that any man deserting a business of such importance, under pretext of any avocation, deserved the severest censure; as for his part he did not do so. Gentlemen should be as well prepared to combat and meet every proposition in the General Committee as in the whole Convention; he hoped gentlemen would be prepared to speak in both, but was for adjourning till Monday.

General *Ogle* declared himself as much an enemy to delay as any man, but two days were as little as could be offered for the consideration of a subject of as much importance as was ever agitated in any assembly; that it went little short of a subversion of the Constitution: (here a general cry of No, No) He then adverted to the observations of gentle-

men, that every delegate should have attended the whole progress of the business, but said it was impossible he could have done so, being on a Committee in the House of Commons; he did not want a dangerous delay, but wished time for every man to be fully informed; and when the subject of a more equal representation was gone into, he feared every man would tremble on its threshold.

The Earl of *Bristol* said, that if the matter was adjourned till Monday, and the Convention at large to take it up, without going into the committee, it would save much trouble, and meet with little opposition.

Mr. *Brownlow*. It has been said, that the resolutions in the report of your Sub-Committee propose alterations in the Constitution; but I do not look upon them in the light of alterations, they are a renovation of the Constitution, it is bringing it back to its ancient form: that the people should be represented, you will not call that an alteration; and 'tis notorious that the people have not been represented. The proper manner of investigating this subject is in a committee, who by such investigation and consideration of it, would correct their own judgments there. Ought not the people to be adequately represented? I cannot say any thing of the present Parliament; they have been of too short duration to form an adequate opinion; but this much I will assert, that the people are not fully represented. I am for deliberating the subject daily, to shew a proper zeal in the business, which is of the very highest importance to the nation; I have esteemed it as such, for I have neglected my attendance in the House of Commons, merely to do my duty here, and am on that account held as a delinquent, and ordered into the custody of the Serjeant at Arms.

Colonel *Lyster*. The leading character of the resolutions were of little discussion, but great information; the examination of the subject in the committee would elucidate it, and be a source of information to gentlemen who had been absent from the Sub-Committee in the House of Commons.

Colonel Sir *Edward Newenham*. There was a very material reason indeed for going into the General Com-

mittee to-morrow, in order to afford full scope for investigation, as every day of the ensuing week are appointed for ballots in the House of Commons.

Colonel *Bousfield* said the time of country gentlemen must be allowed to be extremely precious, but he was persuaded that every man in this Convention would give up that time most cheerfully in forwarding and completing the great object of a Reform in Parliament. An Honourable Delegate (Colonel O'Hara) had mentioned, that three days were spent in discussing an election bill in the House of Commons; there was a great distinction between the two assemblies; in the one place much discussion and debate might have arisen from interested views, to procrastinate, to defeat any measure that might be thought to militate against the private interest or pursuits of individuals; in this assembly no man had an object but for the general good, time would not therefore be wasted, and the matter would be more amply discussed in two days in such an assembly, than in others of another complexion in much a greater period. An Honourable Delegate (General Ogle) had talked of a subversion of the Constitution; the present report and resolutions went only to reanimate, and not to alter the Constitution, to admit the people to an equal suffrage, which was their undoubted birth-right, and the very great majorities that daily appeared in the House of Commons against every constitutional question, were sufficient evidence of the defects in the present Representation, and ought to make us serious in this point, and to allot that portion of time to its discussion to-morrow, that it so eminently deserved.

Mr. *Newport* could see no possible objection against going into the business to-morrow. They need not indeed go into the very specific question, but they might approach it by investigation. The many sources of information so much spoke of, were sources to be found in that House, and not from the little dirty cabals which might be formed out of it. He called on gentlemen, in the name of Heaven, to have their minds open to conviction. The Constitution was not to be altered, but to

be invigorated—to bring it back to the original system and true representation; but he feared there were many men who shrunk back from an attack upon that polluted system, of which they had been so long the supporters.—Independent men, acting for the public good, would scorn the meanness of any subterfuge. Some said they were attending their duty in Parliament; but he begged that gentlemen would endeavour to gain information in its proper place, to be convinced by the arguments of public virtue, and not run out of doors to listen to those of sinister men; that they would go into a committee to-morrow, on the momentous question before them, and not be guided by the desires of a few sordid men, who would sacrifice every thing to venality and corruption.—But they dreaded information here—He wished for every man to act decidedly, and hear the arguments of freemen stated there with precision for the government of their conduct. The doors of the Select Committee were yesterday and every day open for the information of all delegates who wished to be convinced from public virtue, and information should be acquired only here, and not to take the sense of narrow selfish men who would sacrifice every thing at the shrine of corruption.

Major *Fitzgerald* was for postponing the business till Monday, not with a view of deriving information out of doors, from narrow-minded selfish men, but to inform his own understanding on a point where they were remodeling the Constitution. (here he was called to order) Gentlemen must be very perverse who would not allow one day for deliberation; no call of the House of Commons ever took place till three or four o'clock, and could not therefore interfere with that Convention, who were to meet every morning at ten. Several of the resolutions in the report on your table introduce new rights, and some of those which relate to boroughs are vague.

Colonel *O'Hara* only recommended what he thought best, but had no objection to the motion for Monday being withdrawn.

Lord *Farnham* did not mean to give any unnecessary interruption, but he was not ashamed to say, that he

would look for information as well without as within doors. An insinuation was thrown out about the arts of delay; he was a stranger to any such arts; but he could not think that asking a day extraordinary, for the mature exercise of judgment, came under that description. He was willing to take the opinion of that meeting, whether Monday or to-morrow were the most proper days on which to deliberate the question?

The motion was then put for adjourning till Monday, which being negatived, that for adjourning till to-morrow was put, and carried in the affirmative.

Mr. *Morris* still contended for Monday.

Mr. *Hackett* opposed it, and said that 'it was a rule in all assemblies that no new question could be put on a matter already decided; and he wished it should be a rule of that assembly, that it would not suffer any of its members to descend to personalities.

Baron *Dillon* read in his place the title and substance of a paper, transmitted to him from the Roman Catholics of the county of Meath, disclaiming any power to have been vested in any person to declare their sentiments, save the committee in Dublin, where Sir Patrick Bellew had presided, and in whose resolutions they concurred.

Ordered to lie on the table for the perusal of the members.

Adjourned 'till to-morrow morning at ten o'clock.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 22, 1783.

ABOUT eleven o'clock General Earl *Charlemont* took the Chair.—Roll called over.

Mr. *Hackett* moved, that a list of those delegates who had never attended, be printed.—Ordered accordingly.

Mr. *Hackett* then said, that some resolutions of the Roman Catholics of the city of Waterford, had been communicated to him, to be laid before the Convention; that they expressed the gratitude of that great body of men, for the favours already conferred by the legislature, and their willingness to receive whatever indulgence may

be extended to them :—He then moved, that these resolutions do lie on the table, and that they be printed.—Ordered accordingly.

Mr. *Morris* moved the order of the day, which being agreed to, the Convention resolved into a General Committee, to take into consideration the report of the Sub-Committee.

Right Honourable *William Brownlow* in the Chair.

The first resolution was then read,

“Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that no elector in any county, city, town, borough, or manor, within the kingdom of Ireland, be permitted to vote for any Representative in Parliament for said county, &c. unless his right of voting arises from landed property of 20^l. per ann. within the said county, &c. as herein after specified.*”

Mr. *Stewart*, of (Killamoon) moved an amendment, that the word county be expunged.

Mr. *Newpart* thought the motion unnecessary, as no reasons had been adduced, for expunging the word county. The resolution ought not to be altered, as the most corrupt uses had been made by some men of their forty shilling freeholds, in perhaps, three or four counties, who posted from one to the other, to vote at general elections.—Many advantages would also be derived from the resolution; it would cause freeholders to be resident, and increase population. It would prevent the mean arts made use of at elections, where forty shilling freeholders were disgracefully poured in, and took away the number of false electors intruded on the Constitution. He was therefore against expunging the word county.

Mr. *Rochfort* thought a ten pound freehold was a sufficient qualification for voting.

Mr. *Loyd* said, that carrying the resolution would put an end to all the charters of towns and boroughs in the kingdom.

Mr. *Edgeworth* contended that the resolution was the great basis of the reform, and he had heard no arguments which could induce him to alter that opinion—that this resolution was essential to the reform—if he understood the spirit of the plan before them, it was formed chiefly upon

ideas of exact registry and residence, and the enlargement of boroughs. Those who wished to confine the number of electors, might perhaps be glad to preserve their ubiquity—but he hoped that that infamous traffic would soon be at an end. He had heard of the landed, and had heard of the monied interest of Ireland, but this was the first time he had heard of the itinerant interest of Ireland.

Major *Moore*, as one of the Sub-Committee, supported the resolution. It was not independents that it struck at, but mercenaries, unconstitutional mercenaries of landlords, whom they had at their back on all elections. Extra freemen it would also prevent from being a curse in chartered towns. The resolution was framed within the letter of the Constitution, and they should be careful not to oppose it.

Colonel *Hayes* was not for having the word county expunged. He conceived the resolution well calculated to save expence in elections, and was an enemy, as much as any man, to itinerant voters. As to petty and corrupt boroughs, if he had only his own feelings to consult, he would join in wishing them annihilated, but as he considered himself as guardian of the rights of a departed friend, a man of the most amiable character, of noble principles, who had guarded all in his power from a borough he was considered the patron of, from now being venal or corrupt, he considered private faith the basis of public virtue, and wished that some consideration might be made to those who might be injured by the indcision.

Mr. *Blosset* had many reasons for opposing the amendment; but one in particular he would mention: He attended the election for the county of Galway, which lasted 52 days, and such an election, he hoped, would never be seen again. The number of freeholders who voted were about 1000, and a number of those were 40s. freeholders, sent by a great Peer to a Right Honourable Commoner, from the distance of 70 miles, and who had never seen their freeholds, perhaps, but once, that they had perched on it, and then flew away again. About a hundred of such miscreants voted at that election. This

was sufficient cause in itself for a Parliamentary Reform; and expunging the word "county" would make their meeting useless.

Mr. *Morris*—occasional voters are the great evil complained of—voters who travel from one part of the kingdom to the other, to vote on a general election:—This resolution, as it stands, will enforce a residence—this it was that the committee had in view; and I will therefore be against expunging the word "county" from the resolution.

Counsellor *Fitzgerald* was also of the same opinion. In many cases, the landlord paid the rent of such men. The resolution would tend to discourage fraud, and remove factious electors not known to the soil; and put a stop to perjury, because it too often happened, that rent-chargers of forty shillings swore they had freeholds.

Mr. *Stewart* withdrew his motion.

Mr. *Flood* moved, that the word "landed" be left out, and the words "freehold or leasehold" be inserted.—Agreed to.

Right Honourable *George Ogle* declared he had no borough, nor was he connected with any person who had, but it was his duty to attend to the instructions of his Constituents: he said, to me they gave their instructions on this head, and I am bound to take care that compensation shall be made. He then read the instructions he had received, and moved an amendment in these words, "having a due regard to the interest of such individuals as may be injured thereby."

Mr. *Masson* assured them, he had a greater regard for the public welfare than for any private advantage. A prevailing influence in either cities or boroughs, was in the highest degree dangerous. He would cite one example;—there were 1800 voters in the city of Kilkenny, and not above 200 of them were ever resident. They were like lunatics in the hands of their keepers, and were sent backward and forward as it suited the will of the party, to whom they were annexed as a sort of property. He once proposed himself a candidate for the borough of Irishtown, but a Mr. Monk Mason was dispatched by

government to oppose him. When this latter gentleman arrived at Kilkenny, being an entire stranger, he enquired his way to Irishtown, where the corporation books had been opened, but finding him (Mr. Mossom) of superior strength, he did not chuse to go on; but at the same time contrived, through ministerial interest, for the whole time of six months to procrastinate the election; in which interim, every hanging-on chaplain, and new-made guager, were made freemen, to swell up a majority.

Mr. *Flood* was pleased that the question was narrowed, but it was the object of the amendment to give compensation to the owners of boroughs. He would give them the reasons why this was not reconsidered in the plan. It was the wish of the Sub-Committee to pay the representatives of the people every proper respect: The purse of the nation was in their hands, and it would not be wise to dictate to that House. He saw no necessity, however, for that amendment, because it was very evident that those who were returned by borough-influence would take care of borough-interest; and the majority of Parliament being returned in that channel, compensation was a matter at which they would not hesitate. There was, however, a consideration that should be looked into on that occasion; making compensation in one case, would draw every occasional voter to the House of Parliament looking for compensation also; and right of demand being equal on one side as well as the other, compensation might cost the nation half a million of money. There were not wanting many noble minds who would disdain the idea of compensation. He would not anticipate their generous and exalted feelings: one example would doubtless lead on another, and the whole become a deed of magnanimity.

Mr. *Ogle* thought he was bound to obey the instructions of his constituents.

Mr. *Hatton* said, he would oppose compensation to any man who had usurped an unconstitutional right.

Mr. *Browne* was of opinion, that being so long in the enjoyment of these boroughs was a sufficient reward to their

proprietors, and that they should now come and demand compensation, appeared to him to be very extraordinary.

Mr. *Hackett* said, that when this resolution would come before Parliament, granting a compensation might be a great means of getting it passed there, but he would not wish that an idea should go abroad that we decide on it, we only refer it to Parliament—it is not defined how, but referred to Parliament;—and though this amendment should be now rejected, it should not be looked upon as manifesting our opinion, but of referring it to the consideration of another assembly.

Mr. *Cullen* said, that this amendment was unnecessary; it would be opening a door for occasional voters to apply for compensation. This matter is with great propriety referred to Parliament.

Mr. *Edgeworth* applauded Mr. Hayes's attachment to his friends, but put him in mind that he was not a trustee for any private family in that assembly; if any thing could recall a departed spirit, it would be the voice of freedom in that assembly; and were his friend to arise at that moment before him, he would warn him not to mistake partiality for virtue, nor to prefer private attachments to the great interests of his country.—Who could be expected to sacrifice any usurped rights, if the express commands of a true friend to freedom, delivered in his own writing to the guardians of his fame and family, were disregarded.—No position could be more fatal or more absurd than, that an exclusive right to chuse legislators could become the private property of individuals.

As to compensation for that, amongst a thousand other reasons, he was against the idea.—Was not the Convention met to diminish the corruption of Parliament? and should they begin by the most barefaced enormous unjustifiable bribery?

He hoped that the freemen of Ireland would never descend to such a dereliction of their own rights, to such an acknowledgement of a weak cause and weak resources: They had but one firm support, the virtue of the people, and that they should preserve unpolled and entire.

Major *Moore*—Though he certainly denied the right of compensation being made for the long withholding the

rights of franchise, yet he was very well satisfied it should be referred to Parliament. That Charters were originally granted to trading and manufacturing towns, to give those towns that share in the representation which from their consequence they had a right to enjoy; that usurpation or decay had deprived them of their privileges; that it was a trust reposed in Convention to point out the remedy for their decay and the means to restore their liberty; that by a voluntary concession the borough-mongers would acquire everlasting honour—by an ill-timed obstinacy be forced ultimately to submit, and perhaps to render an account of the meane profits of a long usurpation.

Mr. *Morris* said, in order to get rid of it, if any gentleman would second him, he would move the previous question.

Mr. *Lyfster* asked, What would you compensate them for? Compensate them who have committed a violence on the principles of the constitution!—The general idea is, that this business is to go to Parliament, and he hoped the resolution would not be clogged. Owners of boroughs will still have a considerable authority.—He was averse to the idea of compensation—it was a violation of public property.

Mr. *Ogle* then withdrew his amendment—reserving himself, however, to make his objections in another place.

Mr. *Blosset* then spoke to the resolution at large, and was going to propose an amendment, respecting rent-charges of twenty pounds a year and upwards, who, he imagined, were not sufficiently specified in the resolution; but

Mr. *Hackett* removed his objection, by convincing him that they fully came within the description of voters, and were not excluded for non-residence.

The first resolution was then put, and agreed to nem. con.

The second resolution was read.

Resolved unanimously, *That no elector shall be deemed a resident within any county, city, town, borough, or manor, unless he shall actually reside in said county, city, town, borough, or manor, at the time of his registry, and unless he shall have actually resided in said county, city, town, borough, or*

manor, for six months at the least, in the twelve months previous to the day of the test of the writ, and unless the said county, city, town, borough, or manor, shall have been the usual place of his residence during the period of his registry.

Mr. O'Hara submitted to their consideration, whether registering the freehold twelve months, would not answer the end proposed.

Mr. Flood observed, that in framing that resolution the Sub-Committee were well aware that they were not making an act of Parliament. They went no farther than a plan; and in consequence, new election laws might be adopted by Parliament to enforce the residence of those visions and phantoms of election, which destroyed so very much the purity of the constitution; this was only an outline, but the detail was reserved for the proper place.

Counsellor *Blisset* expressed his apprehension, that there was a severity in the resolution, in respect to residence, and moved an amendment, to expunge the words "actually resident"—for the words "six months out of twelve:" but not being seconded, the Chairman put the question on the second resolution, which was carried *nem. con.*

The third resolution was read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every elector do register his qualification, twelve months previous to the day of the test of the writ, to entitle him to exercise his right of voting for Members to serve in Parliament.*

Mr. Flood said, that the Sub-Committee had adopted the resolution on the principle of being a kind of notification. His own advice would be, that in the framing the new election laws, it should be enacted, "That in case of any man attempting to vote, who should be deemed unqualified by the nature of his freehold, the freeholders should traverse the same, and try its validity by jury;" if this was not found agreeable, they could easily recur to the old system.

The third resolution was put, and carried unanimously.

The fourth resolution was read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that the sheriff of every county do appoint a deputy to take the poll in each barony, on the same day.*

Lord *Farnham*, on account of the lateness of the hour, proposed the question of adjournment.

Mr. *Flood* pressed the meeting to go through this resolution and the next, as the most important of the whole; and, on Monday they might go through all the others. The Dungannon Meeting had pointed out the necessity of their adoption. As the law now stood, the sheriff was made responsible for his deputy; and it was but justice, that the deputy should be made responsible for himself.—He should be a man of substance, and a man of character.

Mr. *Hackett* said, that the adoption of the resolution would facilitate the progress of election, and would lessen the usual expence. Innumerable advantages might be drawn from it, without any difficulties. It was, indeed, proper that they should confine themselves to the outline, and leave to Parliament the filling up of every matter; and great care should be taken in the appointment of sheriffs' deputies.

Mr. *O'Hara* objected to the resolution, on account of the expence that would be incurred by taking the polls in every barony, and particularly in the great encrease of council that candidates would be forced to have.

Major *Moore* observed, that adopting the resolution would make elections be attended with little or no expence; and registry and residence being once established, there would be no sort of occasion for lawyers, as every person must then vote in his own barony, and his qualification be fully known.

The fourth resolution was put, and carried nem. con.

The fifth resolution was read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that all decayed, mean, and depopulated cities, towns, boroughs, or manors, which have hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, by an extension of franchise to the neighbouring barony or baronies, parish or parishes, be enabled to return Representatives agreeable to the principles of the constitution.*

Several gentlemen contended, that, from the lateness of the hour, they should defer the consideration of this resolution until Monday; but having divided on the question

of adjournment, it was carried by the noes, and they agreed to proceed.

Mr. *O'Hara* considered it as his first duty, to attend the business of Parliament, where important matters were then agitating.—Here he was interrupted by the Earl of *Bristol*, Mr. *Warburton*, Sir *Edward Newenham*, and Mr. *Edgeworth*, who contended that their first duty should be their attendance on a Convention to which they had been delegated by the real voice of the people; and their attendance in the House of Commons was but a secondary consideration; particularly as the errors committed one day in Parliament, might be corrected the next; but every step of the Convention must be irrevocable.

The fourth resolution then passed nemine contradicente.

The fifth resolution was then read, which alluded to decayed boroughs;—it was thought by several gentlemen, from the lateness of the hour, it would be proper to postpone the consideration of this resolution to Monday next—but if agreed on, to proceed.

After it was determined to proceed on the fifth resolution, Mr. *O'Hara* declared that he considered it as his first duty to attend to the business of the House of Commons, when matters of importance were at this moment agitating. (Here he was interrupted by the Earl of *Bristol*.)

Sir *Edward Newenham* and Mr. *Warburton* thought their attendance at Convention their first duty, to which they had been delegated by the real voice of the people, and that their attendance in the House of Commons was but a secondary consideration.

Mr. *O'Hara* persisted in his opinion, (in which he was supported by Mr. *George Montgomery*, and Mr. *George Ogle*) who said, he considered the House of Commons as the palladium of Irish Liberty; my first duty therefore, is my attendance in that House, and I will never allow that any other assembly can have a prior claim to my attendance.

Mr. *Warburton* said, the only business to come on in the House of Commons, was an address for granting an

encrease of salary to the Lord Lieutenant, and they would be time enough for that business.

Mr. *Flood* said, it was a resolution of very great magnitude—but he would not press it, if gentlemen were averse to doing it; it would be better if gentlemen had come prepared to the point, but if they wish for postponing the consideration of it appeared to him to carry the idea of delay—he would not press it.

Lord *Farnham* was of opinion, that a substitute might be adopted by throwing open the corporations and enlarging the number of freemen.

The resolution then passed.

Mr. *Flood* moved that the Chairman do now leave the Chair, and report—Convention resumed.

Mr. *Brownlow* reported that the committee had made some progress—and asked leave to sit again.—Leave given.

Convention adjourned to Monday.

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1783.

ABOUT eleven o'clock, General Earl Charlemont took the Chair—when the roll was called over, it was moved to go into the order of the day for taking into consideration the report of the Sub-Committee, when Convention resolved itself into a General Committee.

Right Honourable William Brownlow in the Chair.

When the sixth resolution was read.

Resolved, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every city, &c. which hath hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, be deemed to be decayed which doth not now contain within its present precincts, a number of electors, over and above potwalloppers, qualified to vote according to this plan, of not less than two hundred for the province of Ulster, one hundred for the provinces of Munster and Connaught, and seventy for the province of Leinster; and that whenever any city, &c. shall so far fall into decay, as not to furnish the aforesaid number respectively, that then the said city, &c. do cease to return Representatives, till such time as the aforesaid number of electors be supplied.*

An amendment was proposed, that instead of the word "now," the "10th day of November instant," be inserted, which, after some conversation, was agreed to.

Baron *Dillon* said, he did not mean to afford the slightest opposition whatsoever to any part of a report resulting from the combined efforts of so many men who were distinguished for abilities and public virtue, but he begged leave to be informed by them of the reason why the distinction was made in the number of electors in the different provinces.

Colonel *Flood*.—The idea of a Sub-Committee, who had paid the most mature consideration to the subject, was to procure as large a number of electors as could be obtained, in order to emancipate every borough; the province of Ulster contained by far the greatest number of electors in proportion to the number of its boroughs, the province of Leinster the least. People ask, why not the same number in each province? The reason is obvious: the number of boroughs is not equal; it became necessary to procure a small number in Leinster, because more could not be had; the larger number was for Ulster, as being easily obtained; in the Sub-Committee, the gentlemen of the different provinces chose their own numbers, but if the General Committee made any alteration, he was sure it would be a proper one.

Colonel *Warburton* desired information concerning the mode of registry.

Colonel *Flood* said, there was a resolution for a general registry, and it would also be contained in the election law. The idea of the Sub-Committee was not to take away the right of any of the present voters, although the potwollers were the worst species of electors; we ought to make the new numbers, of real voters, and not occasional ones, according to the old corrupt system.

Major *Fitzgerald*, Lord *Farnham*, and several others, were against the numbers allotted to the several provinces, and Sir *Richard Musgrave* was against the whole diminution of numbers.

The Honourable Colonel *Massey* was for extending the electors in boroughs to all gentlemen in same coun-

ties who possessed property of 50*l.* per. ann.—thought the present a partial distinction, as a 40*l.* elector residing within a barony, would vote for four members, while a man of large fortune residing without the borough, could not vote for more than two; though he had influence in a borough, yet he wished to have it enlarged; he possessed the patronage of half a borough, and would, with an honourable kinsman, RELINQUISH IT FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD.—(Here he met the general plaudits of the whole Convention.)

Colonel Flood.—The good sense and generosity displayed in the sentiments of the Honourable Delegate who spoke last, (Honourable Colonel Massey) deserved respect, and shewed the great wisdom of not specifically going into the compensation for patronage of boroughs, as he trusted many other noble minds would follow the virtuous example; he has, however, (alluding to a former part of his argument) been rather out of order, if any thing so well intended can be so; it is better for the Convention to adopt a general plan for the whole kingdom at present, a general principle, but a particular one as to particular places in Parliament, to have a resident committee of delegates to attend its progress through the House, and corresponding committees in the country; the delegates, on returning to the country, will be instructed to send up particular information of the state of every borough; it is not now the time for detail of examination of every part of the nation, it can be better done by such resident committee and the others in the country. An Honourable Gentleman (Major Fitzgerald) had quoted the number of freeholders in Waterford that appeared on a former election, to warrant the idea of encreasing the proportion in Munster; that idea would not answer, that number contained fictitious voters, which the present plan diminishes, in striking off all counterfeit electors; there were not in all 300 electors, counterfeit and non-counterfeit in the county of Waterford; that county then cannot afford 100 to every borough, and by counting double votes, a much greater number are estimated than persons who really

vote. If we could have a separate body of electors in every county, it would be best, but their numbers will not afford it. This plan, instead of encreasing will diminish the number of electors in the whole, by striking off so many occasional ones; no elector can thereby vote in more than two places; it corrects former evils. There are twelve boroughs in the county of Cork; according to the objection, every elector would there vote for twenty-six members, therefore adhere to the present plan of the Sub-Committee, who were not negligent in their trust; your presumption ought to be, it is not erroneous, as far as we are gone we are determined it should be right, and he was not for holding out any idea to the contrary.

Major *Fitzgerald*.—A number of ingenious foreigners are importing into the county of Waterford, who would shortly be enabled to vote; there were a number of very large towns in Munster, that by new regulations would possess a greater number of electors, and if but one county could be found not to furnish the number of electors sought for, every borough two hundred; he hoped the committee would not be against the rest having that number.

Colonel *Herbert* would support the amendment of his Honourable Friend (Major Fitzgerald) if practicable, but feared it impossible from the present number of electors, and it would be time enough to extend the number required to every borough, when, by further importations, they should be sufficiently encreased.

Mr. *Blosset* agreed with an Honourable Delegate (Colonel Flood) that the Sub-Committee were *prima facie*, right, but we could not be too careful to consider the amendment.

Mr. *Hackett* wished the Honourable Gentleman would withdraw his amendment, as one county should thereby be excluded; we were on a general plan, and when in detail might take exceptions. Let the plan of Reform take in the whole province of Munster.

Colonel *Bernard* said, he had a patronage over a borough, and in the general scale of reformation he would most readily and gladly relinquish it.

The question was then put upon the amendment of 200 instead of 100 for Munster, and passed in the negative.

Mr. *Blisset* said, that on the late election at Sligo, 1100 appeared to vote; 950 of which were real electors, and 150 fictitious ones; there was only one borough in the county, there were two in Galway, where 700 real freeholders, besides an innumerable quantity of fictitious ones, appeared to vote, so that in these two counties there were electors enough to afford 200 for each borough; and from the principles of honour and public spirit which the patrons of the boroughs in these counties possessed, he was persuaded, though he could not speak officially, that they would follow the honourable example of two gentlemen in that Convention, by relinquishing such patronage for the public benefit. There were delegates present who knew the state of the other counties of Connaught better than he did, and he hoped when that state was given in, it would appear they all could afford 200 electors for every borough.

Colonel *Cullen* said, the Sub-Committee were unanimous, and satisfied that 100 was a sufficient number in every borough in Connaught; if reasons to encrease that number were offered, he should be satisfied.

Major *Browne*, when in the Sub-Committee, was of opinion 100 was sufficient to open boroughs in Connaught; his wish was to open every borough—if we did so, we gained a great point; the gentlemen's estates that were thrown into boroughs would be found to be much benefited; he would be sorry to extend to the landed interest, a franchise in towns that had electors enough in their precincts; in some places he saw a difficulty of making up more than 100, and he joined in opinion with the Sub-Committee that 100 was sufficient.

Colonel *D'Arcy* was of opinion at first, in the Sub-Committee, that 100 was the proper number; he now finds 200 can be had in every borough, and was for the greater number, as always the best.

Colonel *Lyfter* was for constituting the greatest mass of electors possible, 200 can be found, and he hoped then the sense of the committee would be for it. Connaught, having so few boroughs, could with great facility find out 200 in every borough,—was therefore for the amendment.

Colonel *O'Hara*—The resolution was explanatory of a preceding one, which passed with so little attention, that he scarcely perceived it; (the resolution had been several times read, he held a printed copy of it in his hand, and it had been debated above an hour) he was for 100 electors within the precincts of towns, and unwilling to go beyond the franchise of all such as could furnish that number.

Colonel *Cullen* was open to conviction; the practicability of gaining 200 was only wanting to convince him. The reasons of the last Honourable Gentleman who spoke, afforded that conviction, as one town alluded to had 100 voters, and was saleable: he hoped the Honourable Gentleman did not wish it should continue so.

Colonel *O'Hara*—The present number of electors in that town are only 13 burgesses; he wished to have it emancipated; 100 voters would do so, and was for that number; he really intended to liberate the boroughs.

Major *Browne* did not mean to give opposition to any proposition for opening boroughs; he was for encouraging trade as well as landed interest. He said, we ought not to throw commerce into the hands of landed men, it might then want support—Commercial Towns, when practicable, ought to be returned by men in trade; he was therefore for 100, as fittest number for Connaught.

Mr. *Blosset* enumerated the boroughs in that province, and said 200 electors might be found for the whole.

Colonel *Bagenal*—That a reform must be obtained is the opinion of every man; he was for extending the election franchise to the largest number that could be found. Let us not throw the whole influence into the landed interest—let men in trade have their proportion; he had however no hope of success, unless we went into compensation.

Colonel *Lyons* begged leave to say a few words.—An Honourable Delegate (Colonel Bagenal) had no hope of

success but by compensation; some worthy delegates had already given a most glorious example, and from a spirit that would follow, WE MUST BE FREE.

General Earl of *Charlemont*—Though his attendance on the Grand Convention might be sufficient to manifest his disposition in favour of a reform, and though he had always held the patronage of a borough IN TRUST FOR HIS COUNTRY, and had only returned, such men as he thought most capable of serving it, yet he would now most willingly RELINQUISH IT, and not one act of his life ever gave him half so much pleasure.

Earl of *Aldborough*—There is not a person more willing to sacrifice any supposed influence in a borough than I am, and I am happy in the face of my country to declare my readiness to make so poor a sacrifice.

Mr. *Moore* adverted to a former debate; gentlemen had been arguing from wrong principles—it was incumbent on them to shew that the numbers sought after could be had from baronies, and not from the number of electors in the county at large.

Colonel *Flood*—As this was a question respecting the province of Connaught, from one of the counties he had the honour to stand as a delegate, he would treat it with all imaginary respect; the idea which struck him in the Sub-Committee was to depart as little from the principles of the constitution as possible; they did not contract the right of any electors, they gave power to every man to vote for four members, another reason it was approved by the Sub-Committee; very often by quitting precincts you might not liberate but change masters, in one instance it would not be liberated, the county town:—there is one capital reason, it is—the constitution meant to have representatives of distinct interests to preserve it from real convulsion, that is a useful part of it. If one alteration is made in the present plan, you must do so with others; he wished to have it stand, as the persons who will be directed to bring it in cannot alter or lessen it in its specific parts, they cannot diminish but may enlarge; he wished not to precipitate any alteration at present, and not to pin down the House of Commons to a small number. One word only

on a subject which had given so great satisfaction—the contagion would propagate itself:—his family had long represented one borough, and thought themselves entitled as much as others, and this plan would ABOLISH HIS OWN INTEREST.

Mr. *Blosset*. The Honourable Gentleman who spoke last always flashes such conviction, that I shall beg leave to withdraw my amendment.

Sir *Vesey Colclough*.—From what fell from my Right Honourable colleague last Saturday, it is easy to conceive under what an embarrassing predicament I lie. I have the honour, for the fourth time, to be returned for one of the most independent, popular, and respectable counties in this kingdom. I have ever held it as a principle of my political creed, to obey faithfully the instructions of my constituents. They, Sir, desire that retribution should be made to the holders of boroughs. Every person who knows me, knows of how little estimation money is in my sight; and as I never considered it in the common transactions of private life, I cannot be thought to bring it in competition of the general and real welfare of my country. Nurtured and educated in whig principles, and bred up with every idea of liberality—being the first man, I am bold to say, that ever displayed a pair of colours in the glorious volunteer cause: it cannot be for a moment supposed, that I would not, as far as I am able, give up any interest I have in a rotten borough, consisting of twelve rotten burgesses indeed!—And if here or elsewhere I should appear for retribution, believe me, Sir, that though my voice is for it, my heart is against it.

Seventh resolution was then read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every Protestant in any city, &c. (not decayed) seised of a freehold within the precincts thereof, shall have a right to vote for Members to serve in Parliament for such city, &c.*

Passed in the affirmative.

Eighth resolution was then read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that all bye-laws made, or to be made, by any cor-*

poration to contract the right of franchise, be declared illegal by act of Parliament.

Colonel *Bagenal* moved an amendment, which was objected to by Mr. *Ogle*, Mr. *Lyfter*, and Mr. *Newport*.

Colonel *Flood*.—Every word that has been said proves the necessity of the resolution standing without any amendment. The Sub-Committee's maxim was not to make any alteration in the Constitution, and to avoid unnecessary obstacles, they have declared, that no man, a non-resident or non-registered, shall vote; the charters of cities gave freedom by birth, service, or marriage, the boroughs did not; you have not affected the right of any freeman; begged that time might not be lost in fighting with phantoms, and was against the amendment, which was then withdrawn, and the resolution passed unanimously.

It was then moved, that the Chairman do report.

Convention resumed.

Mr. *Brownlow* reported, that the Committee had made some progress, and asked leave to sit again.—Leave given.

Mr. *Lyfter* then moved, that the thanks of the Volunteers of Ireland, represented by their Delegates in the National Convention, be given to those noblemen and gentlemen, Earl of Charlemont, Lord Aldborough, Hon. Hugh Masséy, Mr. Bernard, Colonel Henry Flood, and Sir Vesey Colclough, Bart. for their generous sacrifice of private property at the altar of public virtue—Unanimously agreed to.

Earl of *Bristol* moved that this resolution be published twice in all the Dublin papers.

Mr. *Bagenal* was for having it printed in all the papers in Europe.

Ordered, that the following resolution be printed in all the papers in Dublin.

Resolved unanimously, *That the thanks of the Volunteers of Ireland, represented by their Delegates in the National Convention, be given to the following noblemen and gentlemen, who have this day, with the disinterested spirit of patriotism, offered to sacrifice their private interests at the altar of freedom.*

The Honourable Colonel MASSEY,
 Mr. BERNARD,
 Lord CHARLEMONT,
 Lord ALDBOROUGH,
 Colonel FLOOD,
 Sir VESEY COLCLOUGH, Bart.

And then the meeting adjourned till Tuesday morning, at ten o'clock.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1783.

GENERAL Earl Charlemont having taken the Chair, the roll being called over, and the motion of resolving into a committee of the whole Convention, having passed, Mr. Brownlow took the Chair, when the ninth resolution being read,

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that every Protestant possessed of a leasehold interest in any city, town, borough, or manor, (not decayed) which hath hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, or within the precincts of the same, of the clear yearly value of ten pounds, which, at its original creation, was for thirty-one years, or upwards, and of which ten years are unexpired, as per registry, be entitled to vote in said city, town, borough, or manor.

Mr. Morris observed, that by the spirit of the Constitution, no person should be deprived of the right of election, whose peculiar situation did not militate against that spirit. Many there were who held only by 21 year leases, whose situation and character intitled them to the right of franchise. By granting this, an acquisition of number might be gained; and no reason had been produced why they should be excluded. He moved an amendment, that the words "31 years," be expunged from the resolution, and the words "21 years," be inserted in its room.

Mr. Newport was against the amendment; it might induce bishops and others to grant short leases; the tenure and tenants would then be more in their power.

Mr. Edgeworth objected to the amendment. He said, the Sub-Committee had considered the resolutions maturely, and in that committee they had the powerful assis-

tance of a man (Mr. Flood) whose knowledge of the Constitution and powerful abilities are unquestioned; they had frequently been convinced by his arguments, but had never submitted to his authority, and he hoped that alterations would not be hastily adopted. This is the first appearance of the Sub-Committee's making any change in the Constitution: it was no more than an appearance; it has been said, that it is equal to the state, whether 21 or 31 years be established;—he denied it—the longer the term, the more independent the tenant; adopt the longest term possible, compatibly with the present settlements of property, and landlords will thereby be induced to grant such tenure to increase their influence. Let any man travel over several parts of the country and view the wretched dwellings of most of the tenantry, occasioned by holding under short tenures. The original resolution went to make the bulk of freeholders; and the people more comfortable in their circumstances and in their dwellings; he wished to see the face of this country soon alter much for the better. With an increase of independence the people will have a more enlarged education—new wants and new tastes will urge them to that industry which, fostered by a free government, would give to Ireland that importance in Europe to which it was intitled by her natural advantages.

Mr. *Morris* having heard, he said, no argument which could make him alter his opinion, he would not withdraw his amendment.

Major *Moore* supported Mr. *Morris*. A very large and respectable number of the community would be totally cut off from the right of voting, if the amendment was not adopted. A case might be adduced in bishops and college leases, as they were only for 21 years, and the holders of such leases could not be excluded from the rights of freemen. To enlarge such rights was the purpose of their meeting there, and it suited the dignity of a National Convention to act upon a broad and liberal basis; and highly as he honoured and respected the members who composed the Sub-Committee, he must, from the conviction of its utility, support the amendment.

Mr. *Hackett* pressed unanimity in all their proceedings, as the great leading principle which alone could give efficacy to their proceedings. It would be unwise, as well as unnecessary, to alter or amend the resolutions of the Sub-Committee, except in very material points indeed. In the instances of bishops and endowments, there was a right of making leases for 21 years, and if they agreed to the amendment, it would be comprehending them as freeholders; and great as the influence of the clergy was already, he believed no gentleman in the Convention could form the wish of giving that influence greater scope of operation. He observed also, that the power of absentees would be increased by it, and in the county of Wicklow, where no longer leases were granted than for 21 years, the greater part of the land was the property of absentees. He called upon gentlemen to consider the matter with attention, as he found inclined, by the weight of every reason, to vote against the amendment.

Mr. *Lyfter* declared himself of the same opinion, as did Mr. *Herbert*, and both of them intreated Mr. *Morris* to withdraw his amendment.

Lord *Aldborough* declared, to his own knowledge, that the matter alluded to, of the county of Wicklow leases, was an absolute fact.

Mr. *Morris* was prevailed on to withdraw his motion.

After this an amendment was proposed, that the words "15 years unexpired," be inserted in the room of "10 years;" which was carried in the affirmative.

Another amendment was moved, "and that the same rule should extend to leasehold interests in counties."

Mr. *Herbert* arose to oppose the amendment. He said, it never was the intention of the legislature to allow the freedom of voting to those holding such leasehold interests in counties. In cities, towns, and boroughs, this liberty might be allowed, but nothing short of real property should intitle men to such a privilege in counties; because there was a wide difference between free-

hold and leasehold interests—the freehold reverting to the heirs at law, the leaseholds to the executors. The counties (he said) were pretty well guarded already; the object they met upon to reform, was the rotten boroughs.

Mr. *Morris* contended, that extending the right of franchise to leaseholders, would not be a dangerous or unwise measure.

Mr. *Hackett* observed, that among the objects offered, three of them seemed to make an impression: first, that it would be an innovation on the Constitution; secondly, that the principal objects of reform should be the rotten boroughs; and thirdly, that personal property going to executors, and not to heirs at law, should not confer the right of voting. He asserted, there was no innovation; it was the principal of the Constitution that property should be represented; and leaseholds were as well entitled to it as freeholds. It was an absurdity to imagine, that he who held ten pounds a year for 31 years, was not a better estate, and rendered the possessor less dependent than the possessor of forty shillings a year for life. It was evident, he said, that a reform in counties was as necessary as in cities, towns, and boroughs; for he knew a county to be as absolute a borough as any in Ireland; and the general opinion gone abroad was, that encreasing the number of electors, and extending the right of voting, was expected to form the general means of emancipation. He could not see why leaseholders would not exercise the right of franchise, with as much propriety as freeholders; and therefore he would vote for the amendment.

Major *Moore* still supported the efficacy of the amendment. Property claimed the most careful attention; and leaseholders were, by reason and true spirit of the Constitution, as well intitled to vote as freeholders. It was thrown out that leaseholders would be more liable to undue influence than the others; but a moment's consideration would shew the contrary. Which (said he) is the most likely to be influenced by a landlord, the elderly man who has but a life interest and a large family, or he who possessed a lease of 31 years?—

Which most likely to preserve his independence, the man who has a fixed interest for a number of years, or he whose family's support depends upon his infirm life, or his own support, perhaps, upon the life of another, trembling at the threshold of the grave? The qualification of the leaseholder is likewise extended to ten pounds per annum; whereas that of the lifeholder is but forty shillings. The people out of doors look for this extension, and a refusal would only lead them to pronounce that assembly an aristocratical junto. The reform itself would suffer in its popularity from the rejection of the amendment, which is extended on a large and generous scale;—no description of man, from the viceroy to the peasant, could object to it.—It encroached upon no real rights or pretended privileges.—The answers of all the enlightened men in England, whom the Committee of Correspondence consulted, were in favour of it.—But if we rejected the amendment, our reform might be deemed mere matter of moonshine, and all the world would testify, that when we had a large field for reformation, we totally declined it. He therefore declared, that he would most heartily vote for the amendment.

Colonel *Lyfter* wished that gentlemen would condescend to withdraw their motion for an amendment. We adopted 31, instead of 21, to encourage voters, and not circumscribe their interests.

Colonel *Bagenal* wished to expunge the whole resolution.

Mr. *Newport* had one short argument.—The gentlemen of this country, by settlements, could not in general grant more than 21 years, the Sub-Committee would, but for that reason, have taken a longer tenure to improve the country and allow tenants to build: if 21 years were allowed, landlords would never give a longer tenure.

Colonel *Hayes* had received particular instructions from his constituents, and loved to obey them; he always conceived the great objections to executing the plan of reform, was the difficulties of steering a middle course;

he adverted to a most beautiful description of the Constitution given by his Honourable Friend (Mr. Edgeworth) of a masonry pile and stately edifice, rising from the earth upon the broad basis of the freeholders like a pyramid to the throne. He had said, that the foundation, composed of the loose unconnected individuals without property, existed as part of it, though unseen. But if every part were not well and solidly founded, if any part remained in a state liable to be tainted, or to fall into decay, in a few years that beautiful structure would again be demolished; he was for making the tenantry as respectable and independent as possible, and against the amendment.

Colonel *Lyffer* most eloquently explained the conduct and intentions of the Sub-Committee; the counties were already correct, and they did not extend the franchise; the boroughs were corrupt, and they found a necessity for the resolution to extend to them.

Mr. Fitton.—I think myself particularly called upon to support this motion, as I had the honour of seconding a similar one, made by a worthy friend of mine in the Sub-Committee; the motion was negatived there, by so very small a majority, that I am confident the introduction of a reconsideration in this place, will not be subject to the charge of trespassing on the time of the Convention. The great ruling principle which situates this respectable body is, as I apprehend, to give a liberty of voting for a Representative in Parliament to every person with whom that franchise can be intrusted with safety to the whole community. I shall not go into the argument with respect to the ideas of several respectable men in another kingdom, of giving a right of voting to every man in the state; it seems not to be the sense of any individual in the Convention: I shall only observe, that Mr. Locké, and other theoretical writers, have laid it down as a principle, that one of the great original intentions of forming society was the preservation of private property. Government, or the forms of legislation, were the necessary consequence of the association of several human beings with different ruling passions.

and different minds; it therefore seems not unreasonable that every man who is admitted to a share in the government should have part of that, the preservation of which was one of the objects of society, viz. property. Taking it, therefore, as a fixed principle that property is a necessary qualification of an elector, the next enquiry is, what kind of property that should be. Your Sub-Committee have very properly determined that the kind of property should be landed property, because landed property is visible—because the proprietor is easily discovered. Upon the broad principle of extending franchise, I was once of opinion, that monied property should be a qualification; but monied property is of so secret and fugitive a nature as to elude the provisions of the strictest laws which could be framed, and to lay a groundwork for the greatest election-frauds. I am to take for granted then, that the qualification of an elector should be landed property. Is not a lease for years property? Is it not visible property—landed property?—Is it not, in many instances, a more valuable property than a lease for life?—What is the value of a lease for one hundred years, compared with a lease for life?—What price would a reversion, after one hundred years, bear at market?—Shall the person who has such a reversion in fee, and a rent of fifty shillings, vote for a Member of Parliament, and shall not the lessee himself, the person in possession of the ground, vote, though he may have a profit rent of 100*l.* per annum. I should not scruple to assert, that such an exclusion is unconstitutional; the spirit of the Constitution was, that landed property should be represented. Here a question naturally occurs;—if landed property ought, by the Constitution, to be represented, why has it so long been unrepresented?—To explain this, it will be necessary to go into the legal history of leases for years. Originally leases for years were granted only for a very short time, the lessee was considered in no other light than as the bailiff or receiver of the freeholder; therefore the interest was of little value. In the next place, the interest was precarious, and the lessor, by suffering a feigned recovery, may at

any time have put an end to the lease: It would therefore be to give a right of voting to a mere tenant at will, a person whose elective existence depended upon the caprice of his landlord. But a very great alteration has taken place;—by 33 Hen. VIII. chap. 11. a lessee for years is protected in his interest against his landlord, and his property is now stable and permanent. The reasons for excluding a lessee for years from voting have ceased, and therefore the exclusion itself should cease. But an objection has been made, that this would be too great an innovation. When reason and the spirit of the Constitution point strongly to any object, I see nothing alarming in the supposed charge of innovation:—but to satisfy even the scrupulous politician who would, perhaps, start at a law to have the royal assent given to bills in good plain English, instead of being given in a Jargon which every language disowns, I will give a precedent. In counties no man could be impannelled on a jury who had not a freehold;—the wisdom of the legislature saw no reason why a leaseholder should not be capable; and therefore, stat. 29 Geo. II. chap. 6. enacts, that a leaseholder who has 15 years to run, and has a profit rent of 15*l.* per annum, should be capable of being a juror; and what is very remarkable, the same act raises the value of a freehold to 10*l.* per annum. If a man who has a lease for years may be intrusted to try the property of his fellow citizens, there can be no reason why he should be excluded from voting for a Member of Parliament. The mischief of an improper juryman must be much greater than that of an improper elector.—In the one case, he is one of twelve who must be unanimous;—in the other, he may be one of two or three thousand; the majority of whom will bind the rest. A lessee for years has property, visible property, valuable property;—there is no well-grounded reason in nature to exclude him from voting, as he has landed property;—there is every Constitutional reason to admit him to vote; and as, by the law, he may be a juryman, there is nothing alarming in his being an elector. I shall therefore give my assent to the motion.

Earl of *Bristol* said, that before the reign of Hen. VI. persons of any property were allowed to vote; but in his reign the privilege of voting was confined to persons possessing 40*s.* a year, equal to 40*l.* now; that restoring the rights would be re-establishing the antient Constitution in this point; he said there was an argument in favour of the amendment, within his particular knowledge—that it was expected that a bill would be brought into Parliament, to enlarge the power of bishops to make leases, and extend it to 31 years; and agreeing to this amendment, might induce his brethren to support that bill when it came before them.

Mr. *Flood* opposed the amendment; he said, that before Hen. VI. none but freeholders were permitted to vote, the words were *Liberi tenentes*. That confining the right of voting to freeholders, might possibly make the bishops seek for a power of granting freeholds; he said, that it was the object of the committee to keep as close to the Constitution as was possible. In the committee, he said, he was against giving to leaseholders a right of voting in counties: but in decayed boroughs he was obliged to seek for electors, and you must take leaseholders as none will be found. He said, that unnecessary deviations were imprudent—that the people of England instead of seeing an armed assembly destroying antient forms should find it respecting and preserving them—that where the deviation could not be avoided in rotten boroughs, he had, in the committee, followed the example, and adopted the plan of the British Parliament in a similar case, 10 years ago; that of Shoreham, that England can find no fault, while we make an innovation in only one necessary instance, and even in that follow her example.—He explained fully and ably the whole proceedings of the Sub-Committee—said, the great point to be corrected was boroughs; they proposed freeholders in decayed ones, when justified by necessity, but it was intelligible in counties and great cities, where the tenures were generally very different, being mostly for 99 years, and could not therefore encrease electors much by freeholders only. In counties the necessity did not remain, they were tolerably free, and

the enlargement to them was esteemed improper; counties and boroughs ought to be kept distinct. If you extend to leaseholders, throughout, you extend the objection. The Right Reverend Prelate who unites those virtues with many others, said, it was not innovation to extend the right of voting to termers for years in counties; he will pardon me if I differ with him—freeholders were the only electors counties ever knew: our principle is not to take away, but add franchise, and that only were necessary; he did not desire to see the power of bishops enlarged, in respect to electors, as many people did not wish to extend the influence of the clergy; let them, however, if they choose, have a power of giving freeholds; their tenants then will be less dependent. Do you think it would ever be popular to diminish the franchise of electors? You do it by admitting leaseholders to vote in towns and decayed boroughs; but there are few Protestants that have not already freeholds in counties, and you do not exclude them from votes. The question is this, whether you will agree with your Subcommittee, who have introduced no innovation? The enemies of the volunteers, and of your measure, are disarmed from any possible objection. This mighty armed body have proved in this instance, as in every other, that they were as remarkable for moderation as they were for energy.

The question being put on the amendment, the numbers were,

Ayes	—	—	26
Noes	—	—	112

Mr. *Darwin* observed, that the noble sacrifice made by Lord Charlemont of his borough to the people, was not likely to turn out any way advantageous, as the inhabitants of Charlemont and its neighbourhood, held their lands under the Crown. He should therefore move an amendment, that “no persons holding lands under the Crown, should be entitled to vote in city, town, borough, or manor.”

A Delegate remarked, that the tenants alluded to, were tenants at will, and therefore were not entitled to vote by the old law, nor by the intended reform.

The Honourable Colonel MASSEY,

Mr. BERNARD,

Lord CHARLEMONT,

Lord ALDBOROUGH,

Colonel FLOOD,

Sir VESEY COLCLOUGH, Bart.

And then the meeting adjourned till Tuesday morning, at ten o'clock.

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 25, 1783.

GENERAL Earl Charlemont having taken the Chair, the roll being called over, and the motion of resolving into a committee of the whole Convention, having passed, Mr. Brownlow took the Chair, when the ninth resolution being read,

Resolved, That it is the opinion of this committee, that every Protestant possessed of a leasehold interest in any city, town, borough, or manor, (not decayed) which hath hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, or within the precincts of the same, of the clear yearly value of ten pounds, which, at its original creation, was for thirty-one years, or upwards, and of which ten years are unexpired, as per registry, be entitled to vote in said city, town, borough, or manor.

Mr. Morris observed, that by the spirit of the Constitution, no person should be deprived of the right of election, whose peculiar situation did not militate against that spirit. Many there were who held only by 21 year leases, whose situation and character intitled them to the right of franchise. By granting this, an acquisition of number might be gained; and no reason had been produced why they should be excluded. He moved an amendment, that the words "31 years," be expunged from the resolution, and the words "21 years," be inserted in its room.

Mr. Newport was against the amendment; it might induce bishops and others to grant short leases; the tenure and tenants would then be more in their power.

Mr. Edgeworth objected to the amendment. He said, the Sub-Committee had considered the resolutions maturely, and in that committee they had the powerful assis-

definite: if the latter, they reduced a borough to be governed by twelve burgesses, and thereby took away the ground of reform; if the former, they allowed a chance to a million of people, and the choice ought to be out of the whole. It did not, he said, prevent another abuse, which too often occurred, that of selling a borough to gain a peerage. He hoped he should never see the House of Lords crowded with such a contemptible race, to the dishonour of the pure fountain of nobility; nor could he wish to see the House of Commons governed by corrupt, ignorant, and unlettered burgesses.

The resolution was put, and passed in the affirmative.

The tenth resolution was read.

Resolved, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every Protestant possessed of a leasehold interest in any city, town, borough, or manor, (decayed) which hath hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, or within the precincts of the same, of the clear yearly value of five pounds, which, at its original creation, was for thirty-one years or upwards, and of which ten years are unexpired, as per registry, be entitled to vote in said city, town, borough, or manor.*

Mr. Bagenal moved an amendment in this resolution, which was, that the words "decayed" and "city," be left out; and in the room of them be inserted, "all those intitled to their freedom by birth, marriage, or service."

Mr. Meade Ogle said, the whole went to the destruction of charters, would throw corporations into confusion, would create a general disfranchisement, and was, altogether, a dangerous and embarrassing idea.

Mr. Bagenal replied, that as a resident, those who now should come in, were to be possessed of a forty shilling freehold, or a leasehold as specified in the resolution; but his amendment must justifiably continue a freedom to those very deserving part of that community who were intitled by birth, marriage, and service, and whom it would be hard to deprive of such a privilege. That the Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Meade Ogle) had brought a plan of reform to the Sub-Committee, which he wished had been adhered to: it was to leave the counties as they are, and to put the boroughs on the the same footing as Drogheda;

that he had always the highest respect for that gentleman's opinion.

Earl *Bristol* wished the amendment was withdrawn, and it might be proposed in a resolution in the General Convention.

Mr. *Bagenal* withdrew it; and having dropped something that seemed to glance the word *arbitrary* at Mr. *Flood*,

Mr. *Stewart* (of Killamoon) rose, and pronounced a most animated panegyric on the latter gentleman, and said, that if it had not been for the abilities and assistance of that gentleman, they would not have produced the resolutions as they stand.

The eleventh resolution was then read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that every freeholder of forty shillings per annum, and upwards, in any decayed city, &c. which hath hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, or within the precincts of the same, be entitled to vote in said city, &c. for electing Members to serve in Parliament.*

Mr. *Flood* moved that it be expunged, the whole of it being contained in the seventh resolution.—Expunged accordingly.

The twelfth resolution was then read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that the duration of Parliaments ought not to exceed the term of three years.*

Mr. *Bousfield* contended for annual Parliaments instead of triennial, as did Lord *Aldborough*; but though Mr. *Cullen* and others clearly proved, that the resolution did not preclude annual Parliaments, and only went to the necessity of not having Parliaments exist longer than three years, yet the question of annual Parliaments was put and negatived; after which Mr. *Bousfield* offered to withdraw his motion, which, on Mr. *Hackett's* remarking that it was informal, the matter dropped.

Lord *Parnham* said, that agreeing to the resolution would create endless confusion and expence. The first year would be taken up in deciding controverted elections, the next in business, and the third in canvassing for a future election. It would encrease absentees, and be hurtful to the industry and morals of the people.

Mr. *Hackett* replied to Lord Farnham, and said, that the delay and difficulty of trying elections would decrease, as the value of seats decreased; that the tenure of a seat in Parliament for eight years, was equivalent to one for life, and was an object of magnitude to gentlemen; but for three years, it would not be worth a contest, as, in that case, the value, and consequently the wages of corruption, would be small: the canvassing previous to elections would decline also for the same reasons. He said, the noble Lord wished to confine the Convention to matters relating to elections only; but he thought Parliament required their attention as much as boroughs; that if Parliaments should continue to be what they have been, it was of no consequence how elections should be conducted: that shortening their duration would make them attend to the people and to their duty: that the venality of Parliaments had almost laid the empire waste; and that the great object of their delegation was to correct it as far as this kingdom was concerned: that the sources of that venality were impure and unequal elections in the country, and corrupt influence in Parliament; both of which were objects for the consideration of the Convention.

Lord *Aldborough*, as an argument for the necessity of annual Parliaments, said, that it was the right of the electors to vote a new House of Parliament once, at least, in every year; because when a Parliament continues for a longer term than one session, thousands who have attained to man's estate, since it was elected, and are therefore entitled to enter into their best inheritance, the actual exercise of their elective franchise, are, in that case, unjustly denied their right, and excluded from freedom.

Mr. *Newport* remarked, that one argument of the Noble Peer still remained unanswered; and that was the threat of absentees and peers. He hoped, this very assertion would enforce the necessity of a reform; the first, who never remained in the kingdom but to disgrace it, and never left it but to exhaust it, could not become objects of regret to their countrymen; and as to the latter, they would become the more respectable, as peerages could not, in future, be brought so cheaply to market. The kingdom had been, he said, too long fatally over-run with

ballhaws, the aristocratical evils who stalked over the land, to the destruction of the rest of the community. The same language was held out at the time of passing the octennial bill; but time has proved with how little foundation. As to the inconvenience thrown out about canvassing, he hoped to see the day, when the Constitution would be on so equitable a footing, that no men could leave the temptation of canvassing from sinister, but from honourable motives.

Mr. *Morris* said, the oftner the power of election reverted to the constituents, the more eager the representative would be to obey his constituents. The expence would become less, and by taking away temptation, bribery would cease.

Mr. *G. Ogle* said, he was an advocate for the octennial bill, that he had not received the instructions of his constituents (the freeholders of the county of Wexford)—that he thought he had no right to vote on this question till he received their instructions, and should retire till the question was disposed of. Four or five Members of Parliament upon the same principle followed Mr. Ogle, when

Mr. *Carew* rose and declared, he thought it his duty to deliver his sentiments then. He did not know whether his constituents would send him any instructions; but as he *then* stood, he would stick by his own opinion—he would vote for the present resolution; but when in the discharge of his duty in Parliament, if he received instructions to take a contrary part, he hoped he should not be accused of inconsistency, as he should then only speak the will of his constituents.

Counsellor *Blosset* entered ably into the history of those innovations on the Constitution, which made a Parliamentary Reform so necessary.

The resolution being put, it passed unanimously.

Reverend Mr. *Bruce*.—He rose as a Delegate from the province of Ulster, begged on their part as a boon, that the mode of giving suffrage at elections should be by ballot, and not *viva voce*. If gentlemen did but consider the undue influence used on elections in the northern counties, they must see how well founded was the application. The landlords considered the tenants of small freeholds as their

property, and thought they had a right to bring them to market as they pleased. Whenever these honest men dared to be virtuous, oppression was sure to follow their disobedience: they found themselves therefore under a necessity of sacrificing their virtue to the mandates of an aristocracy, or of being oppressed: he therefore moved, that the words "*viva voce*, and not," be expunged out of the resolution now read.

It was well known, that in every sharp contest in the northern counties it was the virtue of the 40s. freeholders gave a decided victory against aristocratic influence; it was therefore but just to provide for their security. It would also prevent animosities and troublesome and expensive canvassing, where no candidate could be sure the condition of his bribe would be fulfilled.

Mr. *Newport* said, as he changed his opinion on the present subject since it was agitated in the Sub-Committee, he thought it necessary to explain the ground on which he did so. He had since then applied himself more particularly to the affairs of Geneva. He found that the people had demanded suffrage by ballot, in place of the old mode *viva voce*. The demand was granted.—They intended this but as a prelude to other demands which were resisted.—They began to murmur, when one of their wisest leaders persuaded them to remain contented, assuring them that the point they had already gained, would by silent operation induce every other desirable object; the event justified his prediction; from that day forward the democracy grew stronger in proportion, as the aristocracy declined; so that the other party found they could not maintain themselves in even the shadow of power, without the introduction of a foreign force; this foreign force was introduced, and surrounded the walls of Geneva; and yet such was the effect of ballot, some questions favourable to the aristocracy were negatived by a majority of 1200 to 200. He would therefore vote for the amendment.

The Bishop of *Derry* said, he was always an advocate for the mode by ballot; it was useful, but he feared impracticable; the less clogged they sent it to Parliament the better; though after the pills we daily see that body

swallow, he thought no universal *remedy*, be it ever so unpalatable, could be too hard for digestion.

Mr. Flood agreed with the noble Earl as to the impracticability of the mode by ballot, but not as to its utility. Geneva had been resorted to for precedents, but precedents from Geneva proved nothing. Geneva was not to be compared for extent, for the numbers of its inhabitants, or for consequence to Ireland. Their different situations required different modes of election. The government of Geneva was democratical, that of Ireland mixed. Ballot might be useful in democracy, but would any man therefore say, it was useful in a mixed Constitution. It was not born with our laws—it was not born with our Constitution. The suffrage by ballot was always followed by the ruin of the state that admitted it. Geneva, Rome, and Sweden are instances; ballot in these states had been introduced in times of open corruption. How insufficient a remedy it has been need not be now told. When a man has not virtue in his heart, any precaution of this kind will be vain; that the people of Ireland are virtuous, he appealed to the testimony of Europe, and to their sitting in that House. Why did they see the nation armed? Gentlemen had talked a good deal of the ballots of Romulus—Romulus to be sure was a stout, was a strong, nay, if they pleased, a wise man; but he was not a rich man. Ballots had not been invented in the days of Romulus; they had their rise some ages after, and owed it to the author of the Agrarian law. But then corruption made its first approaches. Ballot was not only adopted in the legislative, but also in the judicial proceedings; how hurtful they were in the one, the ruin of that mighty empire that soon followed, sufficiently witnesses. Would any man compare the verdicts of our juries, which are given *viva voce*, to the decision of their judges, whom every man knows to have been corrupt beyond imagination. It had been said that the 40s. freeholders were under the controul of their landlords; but he could not subscribe to that opinion. There was no part of the nation whose breasts were filled with a brighter flame of patriotism. The gentlemen in support of this amendment had argued, it would prevent animosities between families—it might be so; but for ani-

mosty, it substituted mean suspicions and jealousies, and subjected men to the breach of their promises. He would vote against the amendment.

Reverend Mr. *Bruce*, in answer to Mr. Flood, said that their sitting there was not owing to the virtue, but originated from the corruption, which prevailed in the nation, and was the strongest argument that could be adduced in support of his amendment.

After a desultory conversation, the question was put, when there were for the amendment

Ayes,	—	—	2
Noes,	—	—	119

Lord *Charlemont* resumed the Chair.

Adjourned.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1783.

EARL *Charlemont* having taken the Chair, and the roll called over as usual,

A motion was made, "That it be recommended to pass an act, that all such revenue officers as were excluded by the laws of England, shall also be excluded in this kingdom, from voting at elections for members to serve in Parliament."

Mr. *Stewart* (of Killamoon) opposed the motion, on the idea that election laws would be formed, and this matter might be with greater propriety included, than at present.

Mr. *Newport* judged the motion made to be a matter of no small importance. Men whose immediate dependence for bread rested on the superior officers of the crown, should not be thrown into the scale of election, to outweigh the interest of those who stood upon the ground of candour and independence. It fell within his own knowledge, in a particular county, (Waterford) where such undue influence was made to operate, and produce the most mischievous effects to the freedom of election. The wisdom of another country had felt this injury, and did not fail to apply such a remedy as furnished this nation with a powerful motive for following the example.

Mr. Lyfter, though he opposed the mode, perfectly coincided in the principle; but there was a time for bringing it forward with much more propriety than the present. He conceived that that meeting was not convened for the purpose of disqualification. It was their business to draw the great outlines of a reform, but to leave the investigation and the arrangements of minuter parts to another assembly. The matters that they had already determined on, in regard to registry and residence, could not be ranked under the head of disqualification; because, on the contrary, a necessary compliance gave all the means to qualify. He need not observe to gentlemen, how precious their time was, and how urgent the occasion. The order of the day had a claim upon their attention, prior to any new matter; and it was for such reasons he requested the postponing of the present motion.

Mr. Flood supported the same opinion. The order of the day was the subject that came with propriety before them. The present motion might be agitated at another time, but the agitation of it then was totally informal.

Sir Edward Newenham gave notice that he had a motion of importance to make, after the report should be gone through.

Mr. Bagenal moved, that all Protestants, as well foreigners as others, who are merchants, artisans, or otherwise skilled in any trade, or in working any manufacture, who shall come into, or who have or shall have served apprenticeships to any trade, or obtained their freedom by birth or marriage, in any town, borough, or manor, which hath hitherto returned members to serve in Parliament, or within the precincts that shall be allotted to the same, should, upon request made, and upon payment or tender of five shillings, by way of fine, unto such person or persons as are, or may be hereafter authorized to admit freemen of such towns, &c. be admitted freemen, and upon residing 12 calendar months immediately before an election, and, being duly registered, have the privilege of voting for Members of Parliament for such town, and that no freeman of any corporation shall be admitted to vote for representatives of such town, &c. except he shall be qualified as above.

Sir *Edward Newenham* remarked, that the motion was unnecessary, as the naturalization act held out all such advantages already.

Mr. *Lyfter* said, the motion was only to be considered as extraneous matter; produced nothing but delay, and that the order of the day should be first disposed of.

Mr. *Bagenal* thought the clause he proposed absolutely necessary, or he would not persist in it: that he could see no objection to it; it was no innovation, for it was nearly the charter constitution of several boroughs at present; but it was necessary for the freedom of the country. Nothing but the tenantry had been mentioned, and tenants never can be as free as traders and manufacturers; nor could he conceive that it would be a clog on the plan; for every proprietor of any part of a borough, and every proprietor of any part of its precincts, and every man who had land in the neighbourhood, would rejoice to have trade encouraged at his door, as well as in cities. But even if it was an innovation and a clog, it seemed so absolutely necessary at this crisis, that he would move it. Ireland is not, as of old, an appendage to a mighty nation, who had many slaves and many resources, and under whose proud patronage we had protection and existence; and however unprofitable and precarious they might have been, we cannot have the same from any power in Europe now. A freer world is open, and Europe would be a desert, and Ireland would be the first deserted spot, if she was not as free; surrounded by the sea, every slave would watch his opportunity of transporting himself to that region of liberty; for even if he wished to be industrious, what could industry afford to slaves?

If he could be permitted to say a word on religion, he would say, that religions, as well as trades, must be encouraged, or this country never could flourish: but he despaired; even the Genevans were not to have votes out of the scrap of ground that they had been so long expecting; surely we ought to endeavour to obtain toleration for Protestant manufacturers—we could never have enough of them.

On a motion of Mr. *Wills*, the following resolution was proposed, and leave given that said resolution should be referred to the General Committee:

That no freeman of any decayed, mean, or depopulated city, &c. which hath hitherto returned Members to serve in Parliament, shall vote on elections for Members to serve in Parliament, unless he shall have attained his freedom by birth, service, or marriage, or unless he shall have been an actual trader or manufacturer during the period of twelve months previous to the day of the test of the writ, as per registry.

Mr. Bagenal said, that he wished to have got something more, but was very well satisfied with the amendment, and wished the clause he proposed should be expunged.

A division having ensued, and the roll being called, the numbers were,

Ayes,	—	108
Noes,	—	15

Convention resolved itself into a General Committee, Right Honourable William Brownlow in the Chair.

Fourteenth resolution of the Sub-Committee was then read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that any person accepting or holding a pension, directly or indirectly, other than for life, or the term of twenty-one years—at the least, be rendered incapable of sitting in Parliament.*

Unanimously agreed to.

Fifteenth resolution was read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that any Member of the House of Commons holding a pension, directly or indirectly, for life or the term of twenty-one years, or upwards, do vacate his seat, but be capable of re-election.*

Mr. Bagenal declared that he would oppose these last resolutions, as they sent men clogged to Parliament with too many particulars, and required very much to be simplified.

Mr. Lytster said, he could not refrain from observing on those constant motions, and opposition of gentlemen to every proposition, that they evidently meant to overturn the business of the meeting. He would suppose

himself a minister, (a circumstance which in the line of probability could never happen) and he would suppose that minister a very corrupt one, and if this minister intended to overturn the liberties of a people, and employed his worst emissaries for that purpose, nothing could be adopted to answer that end more effectually, than by constant opposition, and unremitting procrastination.

Fifteenth resolution unanimously agreed to.

Sixteenth resolution was read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that any Member of the House of Commons accepting any place of profit under the Crown, do vacate his seat, but be capable of being re-elected.*

Agreed to.

Seventeenth resolution was then read.

Resolved, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that the following oath be administered to each Member of the House of Commons, and by him taken before he takes his seat :*

“ I, A. B. of do swear, that I have not by myself, nor have I by any other person for me, or at my desire or cost, or with my knowledge, or consent, or approbation, given meat, drink, entertainment, or provision, employment, place, money, or other value, reward, or consideration, directly or indirectly, nor any obligation, or promise for employment, place, or other value, reward, or consideration, to any person or persons whomsoever, for any expences of any kind whatsoever they may have been at, to induce him or them to vote, or to forbear to vote for me or any other person, or to procure for me, or any one else, the vote or interest of any person; and that I will never directly or indirectly, fulfil any engagement or promise, entered into by any person whomsoever, relative to the giving any meat, drink, entertainment, or provision, employment, place, money, or other value, reward, or consideration to any person for having voted for me, or procured a vote for me or any other person, at the late election. And I do further solemnly swear, that I will not suffer any person to hold any pension, or any place of profit under the Crown, or accept of any sum of money in trust for me,

or for my use or benefit, or for the use and benefit of any of my family, whilst I shall serve as a Member of this Parliament.

And I do most solemnly and sincerely take this oath without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation whatsoever. So help me God."

Mr. *Hackett* thought that the person elected was not sufficiently bound in respect to giving entertainments; he introduced an amendment, that after the word *cost* there should be inserted these words, "or consent or approbation, nor has any person on my part to my knowledge and belief."—The amendment agreed to.

Mr. *Warburton* said the oath was too long, and might be brought into a more agreeable form.

Mr. *O'Hara* did not like the tenor of the oath; it looked, he said, as if gentlemen did not wish for a general unanimity of opinion. He moved, that the words "meat, drink, entertainment, and provision," be left out.

Mr. *Hackett* thought the motion useless, as it had been already enacted by the legislature, that no candidate should give entertainments. The oath was calculated to shut up every avenue of temptation, and to give purity to the foundation of election.

An amendment was moved, that the oath should comprehend the candidate's not giving any meat, drink, entertainment or provision, &c. pending the election.

Mr. *Stewart*, (of Killamoon) said it might be urged with apparent justice, that it would be very hard on 40s. freeholders to go a great length of way without discharging their expences; but such a murmur was removed, by the very spirit of the present reform bringing the election almost to their dwellings. One happy reflection would ensue to the elector, at least, that by putting a lunch of bread and a piece of cheese in his pocket, he could give his free suffrage without leaving the intemperate meal of venality in his stomach, or the sting of perjury to afflict his conscience.

Lord *Farnham* thought it would be hard to compel a candidate to shut his doors against a friend, if it should happen

to be in or about the time of election. A gentleman must become inhospitable, or incur the danger of being convicted of perjury, and rendered infamous in his county. It was the motive that stamped every action virtuous or the reverse. A man may entertain his friends without any view to vote on an election. If gentlemen whose situation in life subjected them to become candidates for the favour of their countrymen, were to be debarred the pleasures of social converse, he apprehended very few would be found to make that sacrifice for any honour, be it ever so great.

Mr. *Crofton* was convinced it would destroy hospitality, the antient and hereditary virtue of this country, if gentlemen were prevented from receiving their friends, because there was a probability they would one day become candidates for the public favour. He thought it hard that poor freeholders who came to elect a representative should, through apprehension of corruption, be suffered to want their dinner on that account. He would oppose any resolution that tended to impose hardships on them of that nature.

Mr. *Edgeworth* objected to that part of the resolution, and said that when these resolutions came before the Convention, he should vote against the whole of this resolution.

Mr. *Cullen* warmly supported the resolution as it now stood. The legislature has not sufficiently guarded against those evils; giving entertainments was the bane of elections; it militated against the original system, and it should be our object to bring back, as near as possible, elections to their original simple mode. He said, accepting entertainments demonstrated the approbation of the electors of the public vices of their members.

Mr. *Newport* liked hospitality; he liked hospitality from principle, and not from the desire of gaining a vote. He would contribute, as far as in him lay, to put an end to every hospitality that had a tendency to corrupt the morals of the people. It had been argued against triennial parliaments, the expence they would put gentlemen to. These that argued so, were now the advocates for expence laid out for a corrupt purpose, that of influencing the electors to give their suffrages, not to the man that would be likely

to serve them with integrity, but to him who had, perhaps, no other qualification but corrupt principles, and a fortune that could afford the means of debauching the understandings of the people.

Mr. *Blisset* was of opinion that the motives of these entertainments were in order to gain votes. It was the motive that stamped them with their proper character. As the law now stood, if any candidate gave entertainment after the test of the writ of summons, it would vacate the election. Committees would judge, and have judged it so. He concluded with declaring he would vote against the amendment.

Mr. *O'Hara* contended it would be laying great difficulties on candidates; that they could not with a safe conscience, at any time even admit a friend into their houses, lest afterwards they might be indicted for perjury. He drew some other arguments from the scruples gentlemen of this description might entertain.

The question being put, "That meat, drink, entertainment, and provision stand part of the resolution,"

Ayes,	—	—	122
Noes,	—	—	5

Colonel *Massey* declared, he never gave in person, or knew to be given on his account, one sixpence, to induce any elector to give him his suffrage; but he thought it unjust, that, because a gentleman might one day be a candidate, he should therefore live secluded from society, as it were, in an enchanted castle. The confining this restriction to the time generally used in the arts of corruption would, in his opinion, answer every desirable purpose. He would therefore move, that immediately after the word "election," be added the words, "from the test of the writ of summons, to the close of the election."

Mr. *Stevens* said, a reward was still a reward, be it under what name it would.—A man who had determined to purchase a seat in Parliament, and was prevented by any established regulation to give money, might, at any time previous to the election, send 2000*l.* worth of beef or claret, or any thing else that would sell for 2000*l.* as the money itself.

The amendment was then put, and passed in the affirmative.

Mr. *Hackett* moved, that the words "reward or employment," be inserted after the word "pension."—Passed in the negative.

Major *Moore* proposed an amendment at the end of the 7th line, in these words, "nor did not since my election, or at any time antecedent, nor will I hereafter fulfil," &c. Agreed to.

Mr. *Roche*, after lamenting the injuries offered to the franchises of the different counties, by the procuration of numbers of hardened villains, who for some small bribe, were suborned to swear themselves freeholders, and well known by the name of *BUCKS*; moved, that a clause should be inserted in the oath to be taken by the candidate, purporting that "he had not offered any one to be polled who was not in his (the candidate's) opinion at that time a real elector."—Passed in the affirmative unanimously.

Mr. *Bousfield* proposed the following amendment, "And I do further solemnly swear, that I have not accepted since the test of the writ, nor will I accept, nor suffer any person to accept for me, any sum of money, or to hold any pension, or any place of profit under the Crown, in trust for me, or for my use and benefit, or for the use and benefit of any of my family, with my consent or approbation, directly or indirectly, whilst I shall serve as a Member of Parliament."—Agreed to.

Mr. *Hackett* then moved a further amendment, in these words—"And that I will never give a vote in Parliament, or decline giving a vote, nor absent myself from Parliament, in consideration of reward or benefit, either in possession or expectancies, to myself, or any other person whomsoever—but, that I will, on all occasions in Parliament, give my vote according to the true interest of this kingdom, to the best of my judgment."

This amendment was objected to; and on the question being put, there were,

Ayes, for agreeing to the amendment, 57

Noes, against it, — 62

The resolution, with the several amendments, was then put, and passed in the affirmative.

The 18th and last resolution was then read.

Resolved unanimously, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that any person convicted of perjury by a jury, relative to the above oath, be rendered incapable of ever sitting in the House of Commons.*

Unanimously agreed to.

Mr. *Edgeworth* rose, and after saying a few words, gave notice of his intention to oppose the whole oath before the Grand Convention, but on account of the lateness of the hour (it being near three o'clock) would defer it till to-morrow.

It was then moved, that the Chairman do report.—
Convention resumed.

After Mr. *Brownlow* had reported the proceedings of the Grand Committee,

Sir *Edward Newenham* said, he was sure that his motion would not occasion any division, or so many amendments as had been this day made to other motions. A bill of reform has been long a favourite object of mine; I agitated that question before any public body of men adopted it; I was its friend in the days of its adversity; in the present Parliament I gave notice of my intentions to bring it forward, but would not, until the sense of this Convention was known; every day convinces me more and more of the absolute necessity of a reform, either by a more equal representation of the people, or by an effectual place-bill; we have seen those whom we supposed the staunch-friends of this nation and its liberties, desert their ranks, and fight under the banners of our enemies, and they have proved the most oppressive of our adversaries; I now rejoice to see my favourite object nearly brought to maturity, under the auspices of the most magnanimous, independent, and virtuous body of men that ever adorned this or any other country, men elected by the free voice of their constituents, not like some members of another place, who purchased their seats; our constituents are freemen; they did not receive any pecuniary profit for returning us to this Convention. When I look around me, I feel every sentiment of respect and veneration; it is a proud day to me to have been honoured with that trust; I am grateful to the 11 out of 12 corps

that delegated me—my sole object for these 30 years, has been the public good, and I will not betray the trust.

The well-meant ambition of an individual, though exerted for the public service, must yield to public utility; for my part, I am not blessed with abilities to combat the host of interested men that will be found in another place to oppose any system of reform, as every plan of reformation must militate against a hereditary and fixed usurpation. In making the motion, I intend, be assured, my worthy brother-soldiers and fellow-citizens, that I do not mean to desert your cause; I mean to add dignity to it, and, if possible, ensure success; I will support that cause at the hazard of every thing I hold dear—my life and property shall ever be subservient to the good of my country—with these principles, I believe there is not a man within these hallowed walls, that will not approve of my motion; my defence of it is, *salus populi suprema lex est*.

Mr. Flood has constantly attended all our meetings; he has given his advice with deference; by his zeal and abilities he has united divided opinions; he has yielded to conviction; thus he has proved an advocate for the reform, and an impartial counsellor; I have watched his conduct in another House for a series of years, and I have divided against him on three or four points—I may have been wrong, and he may have erred; if I was wrong, I repent of it; if he has erred, he has amply repaid his country tenfold—the octennial law alone seals his pardon. I now resign my prior right to bring in the bill, and therefore move you—
“That Colonel Henry Flood be requested to introduce into Parliament a bill for the more equal Representation of the People.”

Sir Edward then said, he had one argument more to enforce the propriety of his motion; and that was, when the present heterogeneous medley of a ministry, which is composed of the pretended friends and avowed enemies of liberty, should be annihilated, Mr. Flood would again become the minister of the prince and of the people; he would carry the same principles into the cabinet, which he avowed out of it—he will be a ministerial advocate for a Parliamentary Reform; and who so capable to reform

Parliament, as he who limited the duration of Parliaments.

Colonel *James Stewart* moved an amendment, by adding the name of the Right Honourable Colonel William Brownlow, which Sir Edward agreed to, after paying a just and elegant mark of respect to the character of that illustrious senator.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Ajourned till to-morrow.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 1783.

ABOUT eleven o'clock, General Earl Charlemont took the Chair.—The roll called.

Earl *Bristol* intimated that a report was prevalent among a set of men for whom he had the highest regard, and in whose political principles he had the most rooted confidence, that the message entrusted to him, by the committee of the Roman Catholics, had not been entered in the minutes of the National Convention; that during some days after the meeting of the Convention, an opinion of this sort had prevailed—through the great hurry of business, but he had some time ago examined the minutes and found the message with which he had been honoured, and which it was his pride to have entrusted to him, faithfully and accurately entered;—and at his Lordship's desire the message was accordingly read from the minutes, and his Lordship declared himself perfectly satisfied.

Mr. *George Ogle* declared he had never received a letter from Lord Kenmare on the business; that he had not done it from himself, but merely at the instance of gentlemen, who he imagined had been authorised for what he had done.

Mr. *Brownlow* recommended to gentlemen, that they would pay attention to order when the report was received, and that no gentleman would speak twice on the same subject, except to explain.

Order of the day read, for taking into consideration the report of the General Committee. The Secretary read

the report; the Chairman then proceeded to read it paragraph by paragraph. When the first resolution was read,

Sir *W. Gleadowe Newcomen*, declared his great respect for that assembly, whose public spirit and moderation must convince all Europe how highly their proceedings were marked with wisdom. He could not, he said, at the same time, restrain himself from felicitating that assembly, on the acquisition of abilities and knowledge they had obtained in the aid of an Honourable Member, who had given his assistance to form their plan of reform; but he had one objection to make to part of the resolution which had been just read, and that was stipulating that the freehold of non-residents must amount to 20*l.* per annum. There was not any person, he said, who entertained a greater aversion for those sort of voters, called itinerant voters, than he did. They were the pest of the Constitution, and should accordingly be disfranchised; but there were many men more honourably circumstanced, who, possessing little estates, perhaps from fifteen to eighteen pounds in one county, were called by contingency or avocation to some other county. In such cases, he thought it exceeding hard, that such persons, without incurring any degree of criminality, should be deprived of their birth-right, especially, as according to the plan of reform, registry was to take place; and as it was in the power of every man to examine into circumstances, no ill consequence could ensue. The candidate's oath, appointed by the reform, was also another circumstance which precluded such men from making any ill use of their franchise. He should therefore move that 20*l.* be expunged, and in the room of it be inserted 10*l.* per annum.

Mr. *Flood* said, this subject had been twice already discussed. In the Sub-Committee he was of opinion that 50 should be the qualification, and after much debate, it was fixed at 20. In the General Committee it had likewise been debated, and agreed on; and if you bring it to 10*l.* some may be for bringing so low as 5*l.* There were many circumstances that arose at the last general election, that induced the Sub-Committee to fix

it at 20*l.* for from the best information, many had polled during the last general election, as unpolled freeholders, who had no freehold at all; but 20*l.* was a property of that size and magnitude as not to escape the knowledge of those who lived in the same barony with the possessor of that property; and as elections were in future to be held in baronies, it would totally prevent improper persons to offer to poll. He hoped it would not be lowered; it would be attended with inconveniencies. If you do not enforce residence, you do nothing: by the original Constitution of England or Ireland, residence was necessary to entitle a man to vote: it was in times of corruption that residence was separated: we are only restoring the ancient form. This has been twice solemnly debated, and he hoped no alteration would be made in this resolution.

Sir *William Newcomen* contended, that the description of men he mentioned, were entitled to be comprehended under the intended extension of suffrage; and that the chief corruption in elections should be left at the door of the 40*s.* freeholders.

The amendment was withdrawn,

And the resolution passed in the affirmative.

The second resolution being put, Mr. *O'Hara* gave his dissent; on which Mr. *Hackett* said, it was necessary to call the roll for a division, that the public might know the resolution met only with one negative.—The matter being dropped,

The third resolution was put, and passed unanimously.

The fourth resolution being read, "that it is the opinion of this committee, that the sheriff of every county do appoint a deputy, to take the poll in each barony on the same day."

Counsellor *Morris* said, that the ancient fabric of the Constitution should be preserved unimpeached, except where necessity warranted, was a position which he heard supported in that assembly, with great ingenuity and abilities, and which carried conviction to his mind. That the resolution proposed was an innovation on the Constitution, could not all be disputed. It remained,

therefore, to be considered, whether necessity or its inconveniencies authorised agreeing to it? Two reasons had been urged in support of the resolution; the expence and delay attending the present mode of election; candidates not being able to attend each deputy's court in the county, must be put to vast expence, in employing eminent council and agents, to controul the deputy's acting wrong, either through ignorance or corrupt influence. Where the candidate could be personally present, the necessity did not so strongly exist. If the decision of the deputy was conclusive to the sheriff, then that assembly would consider the difference of opinion on similar points, which might arise by each deputy's making different decisions. By the resolution, each deputy was rendered independent of the other, and had no connection; the consequence would be, that every unsuccessful candidate would resort to the House of Commons for redress; which, gentlemen must allow, could not diminish the expence of elections. If the returns were not conclusive to the sheriff, then the sheriff would on every occasion, in which he happened to disagree with the deputy, send them on new elections, to convene the people again, and make new returns, which could not expedite elections. The county court of the sheriff had been for centuries looked up to, as one of the palladiums of liberty. Their ancestors were not acquainted with that formation of a number of petty, private, and secret assemblies, which that resolution would produce, if passed into a law. They should prefer the open mode of election, in the face of the country, to a mode which could not produce any other consequence, than disorder and confusion. He therefore was against the resolution proposed.

Lord *Farnham* said he voted against the resolution in the committee, but did not insist on a division. The resolution could not, therefore, be said to have passed unanimously.

Mr. *Loyd* said, it would be giving too great a power to the sheriff—if the sheriff had an attachment to any of the candidates;—having the power of appointing so

many deputies, gave him a greater power than the Constitution ever intended he should have.

Mr. *Flood* declared, he wished to leave that matter open for parliamentary discussion, and he would coincide in any matter which could tend to deprive the sheriff of that power. A man appointed deputy by the sheriff, with consent of the candidate, could produce no matter of difference. It was not a new idea, for it was constantly practised in Yorkshire. Gentlemen talked of expence, but it would operate to the contrary, by the quick decision of the election. A gentleman of the law said, it would multiply employment for gentlemen of his profession; he could not, indeed, but admire the disinterestedness of such an observation from a gentleman of the law; but he could observe, that by carrying on the election in seven or eight places at one time, instead of increasing it would lessen the expence of elections. It was remarked, that men unqualified might impose on deputies; to this he would answer, that the registry of twelve months in his own barony, would prevent such imposition, from the notoriety of the transaction, and deter persons, so circumstanced, from going from barony to barony to give their suffrages. It was the intent of that meeting, he said, to carry on matters fairly and equally, and their duty to put matters on the fairest footing, and, if possible, to support the poor against the oppression of the opulent.

Lord *Farnham* and Mr. *Morris* continuing their opposition, the Convention divided, when the numbers appeared—For the resolution, — 128

Against it, — — 6

The fifth resolution being read, comprehending an extension of franchise to decayed cities, towns, boroughs, or manors, from the neighbouring baronies and parishes.

Mr. *Loyd* said, they should be considered as private property: the resolution tended to the creation of new expences, and depriving one set of proprietors of their right, merely to transfer them to another.

Colonel *Maffey* declared, he continued of the same opinion he was in the committee. That this resolution would create a greater aristocracy than existed before. Instead of extending franchise to the 40s. freeholders,

they should rather confine it to that of 10/. and suffer no man to vote under that sum. The adoption of such a mode would prevent their sending improper persons to Parliament; and this restriction to 10/. freeholds should not, he said, be confined to boroughs, but extended to counties at large, on the abolition of the 40s. freeholds; he would therefore move for expunging from the resolution the words "to the neighbouring barony or baronies, parish or parishes."

Mr. *Darcy* said, this would be attended with the most fatal effects—as three or four families in general rule a county, and it would operate in direct contradiction to the plan in question.

Mr. *Flood* said, the whole plan of reform is now before you; if you take away from the boroughs and add to the counties, you overturn the whole; if you alter it in this, you alter the whole—all the resolutions refer to this; if 40s. freeholders are to be shut out and none but 10/. freeholders allowed to vote, it would produce an aristocracy, and by this rule a 10/. freeholder in the county Cork, might vote for 26 men; it is abridging the Constitution;—consider well the measure before you; if you abolish your boroughs and encrease counties no man in England who ever wrote on subjects of Parliamentary Reform, but points out the danger; it will encrease aristocracy: he said, to prepare a bill to answer all the purposes will be a great burthen, a burthen he will not take upon himself alone; the Delegates in the different provinces will send up information here, to extend as the necessity and circumstances require; these delegates from local knowledge will advise the delegates here, to instruct the Members—carrying on the bill—and not leave it to the direction of interested men; leave the county where it was, and it will be better for the boroughs. Is not the Honourable Gentleman (Mr. Massey) an illustrious example against the weight of his own principle; it will be a dissolution of your plan. The Sub-Committee after the most mature deliberation adopted it, and if the Convention does not adopt it, it will be at sea, it will occasion fears and apprehensions in the friends of the reform, it will make its enemies rejoice;—let this assembly stand, as they do stand,

by the rectitude of their conduct; let counties remain as they were—extend the rights of franchise to cities, take away their bye-laws and reform the boroughs, there are the great marts for reformation, let 50,000 armed men capable of calling 50,000 more, without the voice of faction, follow up their own principles; the practice of ten years is a vindication of the principles and moderation of this great assembly.

Mr. *Maffey* withdrew his amendment, and the resolution was put, and unanimously agreed to.

Sixth resolution being read,

Major *Moore* said, boroughs would not, in his opinion, be sufficiently thrown open in Munster, unless the number were augmented from 100 to 150. He could, as having the honour to be constituted a delegate from that part of the kingdom, speak from some degree of authority. Other gentlemen ought to deliver their sentiments of the numbers which they might think proper for the different provinces they represented.

The Earl of *Bristol* was of opinion, to enter into the general spirit of Parliamentary Reform, would be better than a too particular disquisition. This matter was to be agitated in another assembly; and there ought something to be left to their discretion. The House of Commons might think proper to vary the numbers. It would be sufficient for the present assembly to go to the vitals of reform, and leave the residue to the gentlemen who were to conduct the bill for that purpose in the House of Commons. Another reason why the assembly should not enter into particulars, was, the little time they had; as it would be for the public good they should make an end of their session to-morrow, in order that the bill might be brought into the House of Commons to-morrow evening.

The question being put on this resolution, it was unanimously agreed to.

The seventh resolution was then read.

Mr. *Warburton* moved, that after the word “election,” should be inserted, “which may hereafter be created for three lives.”

Mr. *Blosset* said, he would oppose any resolution that tended to contract the right of voting—he would be equally

warm in support of any measure, whose tendency went to extend it; he therefore seconded the amendment.

Mr. *Hackett* said, their plan did not tend to disfranchise any one; it was not meant to circumscribe the rights of suffrage; on the contrary, it was intended to enlarge it. He did not conceive how the amendment proposed was calculated to increase the number of electors; in his idea, it would have the contrary effect; he would therefore vote against the amendment.

Mr. *Flood* said, it was too minute a subject for present consideration; it should be reserved for the future regulation of an election law. If you push this reform, a new code of election laws will be necessary. If this restriction be proper in counties, it will be proper in cities, boroughs, and manors. Was against the amendment.

Amendment withdrawn.

The 7th and 8th resolutions were unanimously agreed to.

The 9th resolution being read,

Mr. *Flood* moved that the words "not decayed," be expunged. By so doing the 10th resolution would be superfluous, that an assembly which had the eyes of Europe directed to them, should be very careful to have their deliberations not only fraught with dignity, but with propriety of diction. The sums which should qualify to vote, ought to be the same.

Alderman *Warren* moved that 61 years be substituted for 31 years.

Mr. *Flood* thought the worthy Alderman had the city of Dublin in his contemplation; there were many leases of 61 and 91 years in it. Certainly Dublin was of such distinction as to deserve something particular to be done for it. The amendment was withdrawn.

The resolution passed in the affirmative.

The 10th resolution read. An amendment was proposed, that 10*l.* be inserted instead of 5*l.* Agreed to; and then Mr. *Flood* observing, that these two resolutions were to the same effect, and to avoid inconsistencies, he moved, that the 9th and 10th resolutions be incorporated into one. Agreed to.

The eleventh resolution being read, limiting the duration of Parliament to three years,

Mr. *Bousfield* moved, that the words "three years," be expunged, and the words "one year," be substituted.

Mr. *O'Hara* said, that if this resolution was adopted, they must address for the dissolution of Parliament. An equilibrium ought to be preserved. The Commons had now obtained a greater degree of influence than they were ever known to possess. The people had acquired an unusual influence in the Commons. The councils of England were now more inconsistent, and their consequence in this country dwindled to nothing. Ireland was become independent, and administrations from another country would not lead the councils of the nation as heretofore. He would therefore resist the resolution.

Major *Moore* declared, that his opinion with respect to this question had changed by the arguments he had heard made use of in the Sub-Committee. That he was afraid the idea of election would be too much familiarized in the mind of the elector by annual Parliaments, and that the great interests in counties would be apt to join to secure alternative elections to each other, and to avoid expence. This made him incline to triennial Parliaments.

Mr. *D'Arcy* said, he coincided with the Honourable Gentleman (Mr. *O'Hara*) near him, that the House of Commons had too much power. They daily shewed they had power to do evil. That was what they wanted to remedy. He heartily coincided with the Honourable Gentleman, that they ought to be dissolved. He would go farther and say they ought to be docked. They were the passing bells of the expiring Constitution. The gentleman said, English councils were divided and inconsistent; *that* no one would deny; nevertheless, Lord North possessed as much influence in this country now, as the first day he made war in America. But 50,000 armed men, who had 50,000 more at their command, would not tamely lie down to be trampled on by any minister. They would not abandon their delegates, let their delegates then speak out. Let them not tamely acquiesce under an usurpation. They were the representatives of the people, whatever another set of men may pretend to be, which set of men would be brought to a sense of their duty.

Mr. *Bousfield's* amendment withdrawn.

On the question being put on this resolution, there were,

For agreeing to it,	—	121
Against it,	—	2

At this time Lord Farnham and two other delegates quit the room; and some expression of Mr. Masséy's having dropped, that gentlemen should not be intimidated, it brought up the Earl of Bristol.

Earl of *Bristol* said, My Lord Charlemont, I beg your indulgence for a few moments; an expression dropt from a gentleman near the chair, that imputed an intention of intimidating members of this Convention by calling for the roll: had the imputation come from an ordinary quarter, it would have galled me, but coming from a gentleman for whom I feel the most cordial respect, I own it has corroded my mind. My Lord, judging from my own feelings, I cannot believe that any member of the National Convention can be intimidated from declaring his sentiment, or publishing his declaration.

It was my fate some days ago to rank in a minority of 26, dissenting from a majority of more than 100; perhaps it was my misfortune to differ in opinion from so respectable a majority, and from a majority of such respectable persons, but, my Lord, it was my pride to have asserted my sentiments, and no power on earth could *intimidate* me from publishing them.

Twelfth resolution, with two dissenting voices, agreed to; 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th resolutions were unanimously agreed to.

Mr. *Flood* said, as the business would be finished to-morrow, he hoped gentlemen would attend—as he would, on to-morrow, move in the House of Commons for leave to bring in the bill—and to add dignity to their measures, he hoped they would remain in solemn assembly till he came back from the House.

Convention adjourned till to-morrow.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1783.

EARL CHARLEMONT having taken the Chair with the usual ceremony, and the resolution and oath being read,

Mr. Meade Ogle opposed the resolution, and a conversation arose about the propriety and utility of adopting any.

Mr. Cullen moved, that the resolution preceding the oath do run *amended* in the following manner :

Resolved, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that an additional oath is necessary, and that the following oath be administered to each Member of the House of Commons, and by him taken before he takes his seat."*

Mr. Roche wished to know why 40,000 electors should be shackled with oaths, while 300 were suffered to run wild for want of a curb ; that by experience it was found necessary to preserve even the appearance of common honesty among men ; he therefore would most heartily second the motion.

Mr. Edgeworth said, he rose in the committee to object to the oath. I think it useless to propose it to a man of honour, and to a man without honour, no tie can be binding.

Mr. Lyfter objected to the oath in every stage. We had experience, says he, of the impracticability of such ties. In the Sub-committee one of the principal objections to it was, the consideration of the inefficacy of such obligations in England. I dislike oaths of enumeration, for every thing not enumerated is tacitly consented to. It is also too long, because, before the last part is repeated, the beginning will be forgot. The faculties of mankind require more retention for the adoption of such an oath, than they generally possess. I acknowledge the transcendent power of this assembly ; yet, changing the properties of the human mind, is one of those things beyond their grasp.

Mr. Edgeworth, in explanation, said, he objected to the principle of oaths in general, because he thought them insufficient, and destructive to the morals of the people. The collection of the revenue fully evinced the insufficiency of oaths. Did it not exhibit a continued scene of perjury and depravity of manners ? In England no member is admitted to his seat in the House of Commons, till he takes the qualification oath, of 600*l.* a year for counties, and 300*l.* for cities and boroughs. But how, said he, is this evaded ? By a collusive and evasive bargain. The candidate buys land, for which he passes a bond with a severe penalty, if he does not, when the occasion of qualifying no longer exists, give

up the land on receipt of his original bond. But *homo fide* is ever part of the oath, yet because the frequency familiarises it, men are wont to overlook such obstacles. Men will take it, who would not in their private dealings tell even a lie, to gain any possible advantage. All the ingenuity of man cannot prevent an oath from being evaded. The present oath is very strong, so are many others, that are evaded. What makes oaths efficacious, is early impression? When an oath is of qualification, and not of conscience, all shame and fear, the two great sanctions of oaths, vanish. Gentlemen have said, it is cruel to make a poor 40s. freeholder swear, and let his representative act as he pleases, without the formality of an oath: but he said, he would take away that too, and to supply its place, would substitute registry and residence; then the respective friends of the different candidates, assisted by the records of the county, would take care to prevent every one from voting, who was not a real elector:—The propagation of oaths was the propagation of perjury. If the higher ranks of the people had once introduced a custom of evading them, it would, like every other evil custom, descend, still corrupting the manners of the multitude. Perjury would be introduced into election and judicial proceedings: no belief would longer exist between man and man, and the bonds of society would be relaxed, and fall to the ground.

Mr. *Bousfield* said, the multiplication and evasion of oaths was justly complained of, and deserved redress, but this was not the case that deserved it; it was this that would remove the source from which perjury had flowed, and unless removed, would continue to flow into many channels. If, says he, our lives, if our liberties, if our properties are liable to be disposed of by oaths, what objection can be made to proposing them to candidates? The constitutions of all the countries he was acquainted with, required oaths; majesty itself was obliged to swear on its ascension to the throne: surely majesty deserved confidence, and should be supposed to possess as much honour as any private member of parliament. It was more becoming and decorous that gentlemen, whose education had made them acquainted with the obligation, should take oaths, than the poor 40s.

freeholder, whom situation, and the consequent want of instruction, precluded from knowing any thing of the matter. If a gentleman attempts to evade his oath, his conspicuous station in life would cause the fact to be noticed; the world would despise him, and his constituents would cry shame at him. If every man in office was obliged to take an oath, much more ought the representative of the people to take it. In his mind, the most irrefragable and convincing argument for the adoption of this oath, was, that every member of parliament was against it.

Mr. Cullen said—By my constituents in the country I always heard it said, that an oath, in the present situation of affairs, would be a most salutary institution. We are all agreed, that the most corrupt and undue influence is introduced into the elections of these days; we are also agreed, that every precaution should be taken for our security against this evil. What better security can we have than an oath? Let any gentleman propose better, and I will give up my opinion and yield to his. On oaths depend every thing near and dear to us. Our liberty, our property, nay even, our lives. Hence, an oath was always, is, and ought to be considered as the strongest tie, the cement of society. The bonds between the constituent and constituted have long been lax and unsure. Let us then apply this cement to their nearer approximation. It is equally necessary, and even more so, to place obstacles in the candidate's way to corruption, than in that of the elector. Another great and substantial advantage that will flow from this oath, is, the stopping of that shameless and unconstitutional traffic of purchasing seats in parliament, which for a series of years has been, in defiance of law, openly carried on in this country. Oaths are not nugatory, though their frequency have rendered them cheap. There is still some difference between members of parliament and custom-house officers: they are not yet quite on a level; therefore, arguments drawn from the latter, will not be found applicable to the former. Gentlemen had also recourse to the English qualification oath; but it is no more in point than the other, for the buyer is *bona fide* the proprietor of the estate, and has the clearest and fullest right to it. But supposing it evasion, it does not however constitute perjury.

Samaritan, has fallen in among thieves who have been long stripping, plundering, and leaving her naked.

Mr. *Morris*.—The resolutions already passed, sufficiently provide for the virtue of the people. This has respect to the candidates themselves, as none but honest men should be chosen. It is not fair to distrust them, or call in the strength of an oath to our assistance. It would be a strange language to say to a man, though you are honest, I will not trust you. The arguments drawn from the qualification laws of Great-Britain prove nothing, the different circumstances of the two countries demand different regulations. In England they have no Parliamentary Reform, as I trust we will.

Baron *Dillon* said, he would give the oath his most hearty support, for two reasons that to him appeared to be very cogent. It would be no hardship on the candidate, as he would not be compelled to take the oath; it was only an option whether he would accept a trust with a condition annexed, or reject both. Another, and no less forcible reason, was, it would prevent perjuries and corruption of morals among the lower classes of mankind.

Captain *Roche* said, that arguments that prove too much prove nothing. (Here, in a few words he recapitulated the arguments used on the same side of the question.) The comparison instituted between Members of Parliament and Custom-House Officers, does not hold. The latter are composed of the lower class of the people, and not supposed to possess the nice feelings the former should be actuated by. A man who breaks an oath is to be stigmatised and put in the pillory. Whenever the appeal is made to people's oaths, they act better. Though they have no sense of religion, they have one of shame, and shame has sanctions as strong as either the divine or civil law. Evasion is certainly a breach of the oath.

Mr. *Edgeworth*, after taking the oath to pieces, and criticising on it, part by part, moved that the whole be expunged, and the following oath, substituted in its room :

"I do swear that I have not, directly, or indirectly, made use of any corrupt, unconstitutional, or illegal means to obtain a seat in Parliament."

Mr. *Stewart* (of Down) said, that by adding the words "And I will not fulfil any promises made on my behalf." The amendment thus amended, he thought better than the original oath, and would support it.

Counsellor *Blossett* said the amendment presented them with a shadow in place of a substance. Political creeds differed. What to one man seemed unconstitutional, might to another man appear highly constitutional. A man might be indicted of perjury, when he committed a fact he thought both legal and constitutional. A jury might differ with the accused in opinion, and find him guilty. Here, owing to a general term, an innocent man (as ignorance of what was unconstitutional prohibits guilt) is punished; he would therefore be for having the oath in terms as specific as possible.

After some conversation, in which Mr. Brownlow, Mr. Lyfter, and Mr. Wills spoke in favour, Mr. Hackett, Mr. Roche, and Mr. Bousfield against the amendment, it was negatived without a division.

The original resolution then passed without a division.

Mr. *Roche* moved, that every Protestant in possession of leases, originally made for 61 years, or upwards, of 10*l.* yearly, and of which 20 years remains unexpired, be permitted to vote at elections. This, after a short conversation, was carried.

Ayes, — — — 59

Noes, — — — 52

Mr. *Hackett* moved, that the resolution now passed be inserted between the 8th and 9th resolution, so that it stand the 9th resolution.

Agreed to.

Sir *Walter Sinnot* moved, that it be a recommendation to the several counties, to assemble in their capacity as freeholders, and to instruct their representatives in parliament to support the bill for the more equal representation of the people.

they should rather confine it to that of 10*l.* and suffer no man to vote under that sum. The adoption of such a mode would prevent their sending improper persons to Parliament; and this restriction to 10*l.* freeholds should not, he said, be confined to boroughs, but extended to counties at large, on the abolition of the 40*s.* freeholds; he would therefore move for expunging from the resolution the words "to the neighbouring barony or baronies, parish or parishes."

Mr. *Darcy* said, this would be attended with the most fatal effects—as three or four families in general rule a county, and it would operate in direct contradiction to the plan in question.

Mr. *Flood* said, the whole plan of reform is now before you; if you take away from the boroughs and add to the counties, you overturn the whole; if you alter it in this, you alter the whole—all the resolutions refer to this; if 40*s.* freeholders are to be shut out and none but 10*l.* freeholders allowed to vote, it would produce an aristocracy, and by this rule a 10*l.* freeholder in the county Cork, might vote for 26 men; it is abridging the Constitution;—consider well the measure before you; if you abolish your boroughs and encrease counties no man in England who ever wrote on subjects of Parliamentary Reform, but points out the danger; it will encrease aristocracy: he said, to prepare a bill to answer all the purposes will be a great burthen, a burthen he will not take upon himself alone; the Delegates in the different provinces will send up information here, to extend as the necessity and circumstances require; these delegates from local knowledge will advise the delegates here, to instruct the Members—carrying on the bill—and not leave it to the direction of interested men; leave the county where it was, and it will be better for the boroughs. Is not the Honourable Gentleman (Mr. *Massey*) an illustrious example against the weight of his own principle; it will be a dissolution of your plan. The Sub-Committee after the most mature deliberation adopted it, and if the Convention does not adopt it, it will be at sea, it will occasion fears and apprehensions in the friends of the reform, it will make its enemies rejoice;—let this assembly stand, as they do stand,

by the rectitude of their conduct; let counties remain as they were—extend the rights of franchise to cities, take away their bye-laws and reform the boroughs, there are the great marts for reformation, let 50,000 armed men capable of calling 50,000 more, without the voice of faction, follow up their own principles; the practice of ten years is a vindication of the principles and moderation of this great assembly.

Mr. *Maffey* withdrew his amendment, and the resolution was put, and unanimously agreed to.

Sixth resolution being read,

Major *Moore* said, boroughs would not, in his opinion, be sufficiently thrown open in Munster, unless the number were augmented from 100 to 150. He could, as having the honour to be constituted a delegate from that part of the kingdom, speak from some degree of authority. Other gentlemen ought to deliver their sentiments of the numbers which they might think proper for the different provinces they represented.

The Earl of *Bristol* was of opinion, to enter into the general spirit of Parliamentary Reform, would be better than a too particular disquisition. This matter was to be agitated in another assembly; and there ought something to be left to their discretion. The House of Commons might think proper to vary the numbers. It would be sufficient for the present assembly to go to the vitals of reform, and leave the residue to the gentlemen who were to conduct the bill for that purpose in the House of Commons. Another reason why the assembly should not enter into particulars, was, the little time they had; as it would be for the public good they should make an end of their session to-morrow, in order that the bill might be brought into the House of Commons to-morrow evening.

The question being put on this resolution, it was unanimously agreed to.

The seventh resolution was then read.

Mr. *Warburton* moved, that after the word "election," should be inserted, "which may hereafter be created for three lives."

Mr. *Blosset* said, he would oppose any resolution that tended to contract the right of voting—he would be equally

warm in support of any measure, whose tendency went to extend it; he therefore seconded the amendment.

Mr. *Hackett* said, their plan did not tend to disfranchise any one; it was not meant to circumscribe the rights of suffrage; on the contrary, it was intended to enlarge it. He did not conceive how the amendment proposed was calculated to increase the number of electors; in his idea, it would have the contrary effect; he would therefore vote against the amendment.

Mr. *Flood* said, it was too minute a subject for present consideration; it should be reserved for the future regulation of an election law. If you push this reform, a new code of election laws will be necessary. If this restriction be proper in counties, it will be proper in cities, boroughs, and manors. Was against the amendment.

Amendment withdrawn.

The 7th and 8th resolutions were unanimously agreed to.

The 9th resolution being read,

Mr. *Flood* moved that the words "not decayed," be expunged. By so doing the 10th resolution would be superfluous, that an assembly which had the eyes of Europe directed to them, should be very careful to have their deliberations not only fraught with dignity, but with propriety of diction. The sums which should qualify to vote, ought to be the same.

Alderman *Warren* moved that 61 years be substituted for 31 years.

Mr. *Flood* thought the worthy Alderman had the city of Dublin in his contemplation; there were many leases of 61 and 91 years in it. Certainly Dublin was of such distinction as to deserve something particular to be done for it. The amendment was withdrawn.

The resolution passed in the affirmative.

The 10th resolution read. An amendment was proposed, that 10*l.* be inserted instead of 5*l.* Agreed to; and then Mr. *Flood* observing, that these two resolutions were to the same effect, and to avoid inconsistencies, he moved, that the 9th and 10th resolutions be incorporated into one. Agreed to.

The eleventh resolution being read, limiting the duration of Parliament to three years,

C O N T E N T S.

Mr. *Smith* moved that the vote of 1840 be exchanged and the vote of 1841 be retained.

Mr. *O'Hara* said that the resolution was a most important one, and that the Government must be careful to be preserved. The Commons had obtained a greater degree of influence than they were ever known to possess. The House had assumed an amount of influence in the Commons. The councils of England were now more influential, and their consequences in the country dwindle to nothing. Ireland was becoming more and more administered from another country, and the councils of the nation as heretofore. He would therefore resist the resolution.

Major *Moore* declared, that his opinion was, that this question had changed by the arguments which were made use of in the Sub-Committee. He was of opinion that the idea of election would be too much to put on the mind of the elector by annual Parliaments. The great interests in counties would be lost, and the alternative elections to each other, and to the House. This made him incline to triennial Parliaments.

Mr. *D'Arcy* said, he coincided with the opinion of the Gentleman (Mr. *O'Hara*), that the House of Commons had too much power. The House of Commons had power to do evil. That was what he wanted to remedy. He heartily coincided with the opinion of the Gentleman, that they ought to be sufficient to go farther and say they ought to be sufficient to the passing bells of the expiring Commons. The Gentleman said, English councils were despised, and that no one would deny; nevertheless, the House of Commons as much influence in this country as the House of Lords. He made war in America. But 50,000 men had 50,000 more at their command. He would lie down to be trampled on by an amount of force, and not abandon their delegates, but their delegates would not. Let them not tamely acquiesce. They were the representatives of the people. Another set of men may go out, and another set would be brought in, a sense of duty would be brought in.

Mr. *Burke* said, a gentleman who

On the question being put on this resolution, there were,

For agreeing to it, — 121

Against it, — 2

At this time Lord Farnham and two other delegates ~~quit~~ the room; and some expression of Mr. Mafsey's having ~~thought~~ ^{expressed} that gentlemen should not be intimidated, it brought up the Earl of Bristol.

Lord of Bristol said, My Lord Charlemont, I beg your indulgence for a few moments; an expression dropped from a gentleman near the chair, that imputed an intention of intimidating members of this Convention by calling for the roll: had the imputation come from an ordinary quarter, it would have galled me, but coming from a gentleman for whom I feel the most cordial respect, I own it has troubled my mind. My Lord, judging from my own feelings, I cannot believe that any member of the National Convention can be intimidated from declaring his sentiment, or publishing his declaration.

It was my fate some days ago to rank in a minority of 26, dissenting from a majority of more than 100; perhaps it was my misfortune to differ in opinion from so respectable a majority, and from a majority of such respectable persons, but, my Lord, it was my pride to have asserted my sentiments, and no power on earth could *intimidate* me from publishing them.

Twelfth resolution, with two dissenting voices, agreed to; 13th, 14th, 15th, and 16th resolutions were unanimously agreed to.

Mr. Flood said, as the business would be finished to-morrow, he hoped gentlemen would attend—as he would, on to-morrow, move in the House of Commons for leave to bring in the bill—and to add dignity to their measures, he hoped they would remain in solemn assembly till he came back from the House.

Convention adjourned till to-morrow.

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1783.

BARI, CHARLEMONT having taken the Chair with the usual ceremony, and the resolution and oath being read,

Mr. Meade Ogle opposed the resolution, and a conversation arose about the propriety and utility of adopting any.

Mr. Cullen moved, that the resolution preceding the oath do run amended in the following manner :

Resolved, *That it is the opinion of this committee, that an additional oath is necessary, and that the following oath be administered to each Member of the House of Commons, and by him taken before he takes his seat."*

Mr. Roche wished to know why 40,000 electors should be shackled with oaths, while 300 were suffered to run wild for want of a curb ; that by experience it was found necessary to preserve even the appearance of common honesty among men ; he therefore would most heartily second the motion.

Mr. Edgeworth said, he rose in the committee to object to the oath. I think it useless to propose it to a man of honour, and to a man without honour, no tie can be binding.

Mr. Lyfter objected to the oath in every stage. We had experience, says he, of the impracticability of such ties. In the Sub-committee one of the principal objections to it was, the consideration of the inefficacy of such obligations in England. I dislike oaths of enumeration, for every thing not enumerated is tacitly consented to. It is also too long, because, before the last part is repeated, the beginning will be forgot. The faculties of mankind require more retention for the adoption of such an oath, than they generally possess. I acknowledge the transcendent power of this assembly ; yet, changing the properties of the human mind, is one of those things beyond their grasp.

Mr. Edgeworth, in explanation, said, he objected to the principle of oaths in general, because he thought them insufficient, and destructive to the morals of the people. The collection of the revenue fully evinced the insufficiency of oaths. Did it not exhibit a continued scene of perjury and depravity of manners ? In England no member is admitted to his seat in the House of Commons, till he takes the qualification oath, of 600*l.* a year for counties, and 300*l.* for cities and boroughs. But how, said he, is this evaded ? By a collusive and evasive bargain. The candidate buys land, for which he passes a bond with a severe penalty, if he does not, when the occasion of qualifying no longer exists, give

up the land on receipt of his original bond. But *bona fide* is ever part of the oath, yet because the frequency familiarises it, men are wont to overlook such obstacles. Men will take it, who would not in their private dealings tell even a lie, to gain any possible advantage. All the ingenuity of man cannot prevent an oath from being evaded. The present oath is very strong, so are many others, that are evaded. What makes oaths efficacious, is early impresson? When an oath is of qualification, and not of conscience, all shame and fear, the two great sanctions of oaths, vanish. Gentlemen have said, it is cruel to make a poor 40s. freeholder swear, and let his representative act as he pleases, without the formality of an oath: but he said, he would take away that too, and to supply its place, would substitute registry and residence; then the respective friends of the different candidates, assisted by the records of the county, would take care to prevent every one from voting, who was not a real elector:—The propagation of oaths was the propagation of perjury. If the higher ranks of the people had once introduced a custom of evading them, it would, like every other evil custom, descend, still corrupting the manners of the multitude. Perjury would be introduced into election and judicial proceedings: no belief would longer exist between man and man, and the bonds of society would be relaxed, and fall to the ground.

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freeholder, whom situation, and the consequent want of instruction, precluded from knowing any thing of the matter. If a gentleman attempts to evade his oath, his conspicuous station in life would cause the fact to be noticed; the world would despise him, and his constituents would cry shame at him. If every man in office was obliged to take an oath, much more ought the representative of the people to take it. In his mind, the most irrefragable and convincing argument for the adoption of this oath, was, that every member of parliament was against it.

Mr. Cullen said—By my constituents in the country I always heard it said, that an oath, in the present situation of affairs, would be a most salutary institution. We are all agreed, that the most corrupt and undue influence is introduced into the elections of these days; we are also agreed, that every precaution should be taken for our security against this evil. What better security can we have than an oath? Let any gentleman propose better, and I will give up my opinion and yield to his. On oaths depend every thing near and dear to us. Our liberty, our property, nay even, our lives. Hence, an oath was always, is, and ought to be considered as the strongest tie, the cement of society. The bonds between the constituent and constituted have long been lax and unsure. Let us then apply this cement to their nearer approximation. It is equally necessary, and even more so, to place obstacles in the candidate's way to corruption, than in that of the elector. Another great and substantial advantage that will flow from this oath, is, the stopping of that shameless and unconstitutional traffic of purchasing seats in parliament, which for a series of years has been, in defiance of law, openly carried on in this country. Oaths are not nugatory, though their frequency have rendered them cheap. There is still some difference between members of parliament and custom-house officers: they are not yet quite on a level; therefore, arguments drawn from the latter, will not be found applicable to the former. Gentlemen had also recourse to the English qualification oath; but it is no more in point than the other, for the buyer is *bona fide* the proprietor of the estate, and has the clearest and fullest right to it. But supposing it evasion, it does not however constitute perjury.

That will never support the gentleman's argument, as the oath may be so worded, as to extend to every possible case, and to provide for any latent corruption that the mind of man can devise. A remedy may be found to reach every political disease, to extend to every iota of public venality. Will gentlemen be found so lost, so abandoned to every sense of honour, as to take an oath, which they know to be false, before a gallery containing their constituents, or at least a part of their constituents, who may be shocked at, at the same time they are convinced of their perjury. Let the Honourable Gentleman but judge from the principles he feels within his own breast, and I am convinced he will coincide with me in opinion.

Mr. D'Arcy.—Am I to understand, that because oaths may be evaded, there should be no oaths. The same thing may be said of laws; because laws can be evaded there should be no laws. Gentlemen say, there will be evasions, but I say evasion is perjury—the constituents will think it perjury.

When one of those sagacious gentry goes down to the country, to solicit another opportunity of exercising his ingenuity at evasion, I, or some other honest man, will touch a neighbour with my elbow, and whispering him, while I point my finger to my gentleman-evader, will say, there is a scoundrel, he perjured himself once, don't let him have an opportunity of perjuring himself again. I apprehend this oath will put a stop to the many acts of kindness in the country, which are usually exercised on the eve of elections. In future if any man will apply to a candidate for the loan of a little money, he will not have it in his power to shew his liberality; he will, to be sure, put him off as gently as possible, saying, my dear friend, you know how much I am your's, and that I would willingly oblige you with four or five hundred pounds, but for—*that damned oath*. But notwithstanding this inconvenience to many *worthy* men, I am for an alteration in the present system; as it now stands, it is the small rogues that take the oaths, and the great ones push them into it. But they may, to be sure, say

in their own justification, they did not compel these petty thieves to perjure themselves, they might have abstained from it if they pleased; you might as well murder a man, and say, I did no harm because I did not take his purse. We ought to remove evasion, this source of perjury; because I would propose the oath, were I sure he would perjure himself, because he would become an object of infamy. If a man be criminal, let him be totally so; I am no advocate for doing things by halves.

Mr. *Day*.—I rise to oppose the form and the principles of the oath. Every gentleman must know the incompetence of an oath of this kind.—Every gentleman must know the inefficacy of its sanction. Oaths of office are become proverbial; every succeeding day witnesses the succeeding scenes of perjury they cause. No one good flows from them, and they are attended with an evil of the first magnitude, they keep honest men out of, and admit knaves into office.

Mr. *Blessett*, at the same time that he supported the principle of the oath, vindicated the laws of this country which made an evasion direct perjury.

Mr. *Mossom*.—I was convinced of the necessity of the oath in the Sub-Committee. I have thought on the subject since, and the more I thought on it, the more was I riveted in my opinion. It is to gentlemen whom education has made respecters of their oaths, and not to the poor illiterate freeholder they should be administered. In this consists the essence of your Parliamentary Reform. Every man allows, that on an election or petition they do things, that on any other occasion they would shudder at. But it would be distrusting the members. This is an absurd argument indeed. Does not the King swear, and yet he is not distrusted? Do not the Members of Parliament themselves swear when they serve on committees of controverted elections between individuals? Why not when the property of millions is at stake? This measure will diminish perjury, or at least the danger of falling into it, as the elector won't have so many oaths to take. But I suppose it will be resisted, because it is for the good of Ireland. Poor Ireland, like the good

Samaritan, has fallen in among thieves who have been long stripping, plundering, and leaving her naked.

Mr. *Morris*.—The resolutions already passed, sufficiently provide for the virtue of the people. This has respect to the candidates themselves, as none but honest men should be chosen. It is not fair to distrust them, or call in the strength of an oath to our assistance. It would be a strange language to say to a man, though you are honest, I will not trust you. The arguments drawn from the qualification laws of Great-Britain prove nothing, the different circumstances of the two countries demand different regulations. In England they have no Parliamentary Reform, as I trust we will.

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Agreed to.

Sir *Walter Sinnot* moved, that it be a recommendation to the several counties, to assemble in their capacity as freeholders, and to instruct their representatives in parliament to support the bill for the more equal representation of the people.

Major *Moore* declared the pleasure he had in seconding Sir Walter Sinnot, as the resolution proposed testified the constitutional purpose for which the Convention had met, and must entirely remove any affected scruples that parliament might have, by supposing the plan of reform to be forced upon them by an armed body, and upon that pretence for rejecting it.

Passed unanimously.

Adjourned till Monday.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1783.

EARL CHARLEMONT took the chair, and the roll being called over,

Captain *Moore* took notice of the reception their resolutions received from Parliament; but

Lord *Charlemont* observed; that it was not orderly to take notice of any thing which passed in another place.

Earl of *Bristol* said, the most proper mode of knowing that business was through the gentlemen commissioned to move for the Parliamentary Reform. This brought up

Mr. *Flood*.—Not arrogating to ourselves the right of legislation, and not having forfeited our franchises, and being instructed by this Assembly to move for a bill of reform, I went to the House, in full confidence of meeting no opposition; having but a simple proposition to move, I confined myself to the motion, but I soon found a disinclination in the House to receive it, not but there were many members who were ready to receive and support it, but a more numerous host rose up and opposed it, on the pretext of allowing no ground for intimidation. On this I took the measure on myself, and was seconded by two honourable members of this Assembly, but in vain—rejection was determined on, and that in an intemperate and indecent manner, which I hope will only serve to strengthen your moderation and your firmness. He then mentioned the resolution the House of Commons came to in consequence of his motion. He was sorry, he said, it fell to his lot to give the melancholy relation, but, as the rejection made no alteration in their claim, he recommended moderation, fortitude, and perseverance.

Mr. *Brownlow* followed Mr. Flood, and recommended instead of animadversion on such an act, moderation and fineness.

Major *Moore* lamented the ungenerous treatment they had experienced, as the representatives of a great and august body of people, and that their endeavours to repair the wounds of a broken constitution should be so illiberally construed into a fixed design against the dignity of Parliament.

That their steady loyalty to his Majesty should be construed into disaffection, their love of their country into a design to overturn its constitution. Had Parliament, after unanimously passing them their thanks in every session, just cause to accuse the Volunteers in the ear of Majesty. Was thus their defence of their country against foreign foe and domestic insurgent to be rewarded? His feelings were almost too strong for utterance—but they were the feelings of insulted worth, not of bitterness. The Volunteers would disappoint the malice of their enemies, and smile at every attempt to violate a character too sacred for detraction.—They would shew, by moderation, the wisdom of their minds,—by perseverance the efficacy of their resolves.—Let the castle spy, or prerogative lawyer, hunt for confiscations—our doors are open—the volunteers stand intrenched in conscious virtue—

Just are their thoughts, and open are their tempers,
Still are they found in the fair face of day,
And heaven and men are judges of their actions.

He considered the real enemies of their country, to be the mock representatives of the people, who have prevented the voice of the people from being heard in Parliament. He insisted, that the borough-mongers were equally dangerous to the prerogatives of the sovereign, as to the liberties of the people, and that our viceroys were obliged to purchase their support, by an adoption of their principles.—He said, that any minister who attempted to alienate the mind of his Majesty from his faithful subjects of Ireland, merited impeachment; and that he hoped, that the several counties would address the Lord Lieutenant, to remove from his counsels, all men who dare give advice tending to so calamitous an issue.—As the Convention had now dis-

charged the great trust reposed in them, he hoped they would report to their constituents, and according to their original and uniform design, that their proceedings should be referred to the several counties—that it was for this purpose they had assembled.—That Parliament had affected to mistake their intentions, and that the motion, made by their respectable Delegates in the House of Commons, had only a reference to their plan, when sanctified by the united approbation of the whole kingdom.—He recommended coolness and perseverance, and in order to carry into effect the plan of reform agreed upon, moved the following resolution :

Resolved unanimously, *That we earnestly recommend it to the electors of the several counties of this kingdom to appoint proper persons to make a return forthwith of each city, town, borough and manor, belonging to their county, which is, by our plan, declared to be decayed, to report by what admission of barony, or baronies, parish or parishes, to the right of franchise, such decayed city, town, borough or manor, may best be opened, in conformity to said plan; and, if in any particular place, a deviation from the general plan should, by local circumstances, be rendered necessary, that they do specify these local circumstances, with the utmost precision, together with such modes as may appear to them to be the fittest to be substituted in the place of the general regulation, assigning their reasons for the same; but in no case advising such deviation, unless on the most manifest necessity.*

Mr. Flood seconded the motion.

Sir Edward Newenham said, the idea I entertain of my delegation is different from those of other gentlemen; I am instructed to obtain a plan of reform;—how are we to obtain it—how are we to perfect it—unless it be by getting proper information; and that cannot be obtained, unless we lay down some fixed and specific plan for receiving every useful information; if we do not act upon a regular system, every county may send different plans; and then—we shall be at sea again—and must again send for instructions; which will delay us until the end of the session of Parliament; I think, if I left any matter tending to a reform in an imperfect state, I should betray the trust reposed in me: this resolution is a leading part of the general plan, therefore I vote for it.

Mr. *Hackett* said that it was the business of the Convention to proceed in the reform, until it was rendered as perfect as possible—That although Parliament has refused to receive our plan, we have not relinquished it—That the House of Commons may return to its senses—that the phrensy which agitated it on Saturday may subside—and that it may be able to see its duty. That many members of the House of Commons had expressed their sentiments on different parts of the plan, and that the whole almost was by different persons approved of.—That as the sense of Parliament was in some measure known upon the several points of the reform, a double application to improve the plan was necessary, and that the information which the resolution required could not be dispensed with.

Mr. *Meade Ogle*, and Mr. *Day*, objected to Mr. Moore's motion, and were for the rejecting of it.

Mr. *Edgeworth* hoped it would not be hastily rejected; he wished to have this plan compleat, that the electors might have a specific object before them; his desire had always been, to unite the voice of the constituents with that of the armed body of the people; he made no doubt of their coinciding with the sentiments of Convention, and hoped that their names would form a roll sufficient to cover the table of the House of Commons.

Mr. *Flood*, moved that the resolution run in the following manner, "That we earnestly recommend it to the electors of the several counties in this kingdom, to appoint proper persons to make a return forthwith. &c."—This was agreed to.

Earl *Bristol* moved, that the resolutions entered into by the First Ulster Regiment commanded by Earl *Charlemont*, on the 20th of December, 1781, resolutions that had been sanctified by the first meeting at Dunganon, be now adopted: whose spirit was then as great as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.

Mr. *Lyfter* said, he did not approve of entering into the resolutions—he thought the mode proposed for sending down the plan of Reform to the different counties would be much better to adopt; though he highly respected the

Right Revd. Prelate and noble Earl, he hoped he would not press them at this time.

Mr. *Hackett* supported the Earl of Bristol; he said he hoped the spirit of the volunteers was as high now as it was two years ago. That gentleman said the objects of their associations were accomplished; that he understood they originally had three objects to protect, the kingdom from foreign invasion, to suppress domestic insurgents, and to establish the rights and liberties of the country: would any man say that the last object was completed? He was of opinion, that if the system of corruption was to be continued without interruption, this country would be better under the dominion of England than in her independent state. That the open and avowed controul of the English minister was less expensive and less injurious to us, than the secret and undermining influence through corruption. That when Parliament heretofore acted as it has done now, the very resolutions which the noble Earl offers were the ground of the subsequent proceedings of the volunteers, and every man knows the consequence, every man wishes for such consequences in the present case, and wherefore should we decline taking the same ground?—He said he was afraid what some people in that assembly had called moderation would carry gentlemen too far. That moderation could never be too strongly inculcated: but moderation was not passive submission and servile resignation; that the wisdom of moderation ought not to be confounded with the baseness of timidity or treachery; that the moderation which they had occasion for in the present situation of affairs, did not depend on patience and forbearance. He said he would support the resolutions, because he hoped they would lead the nation to what they had led it before upon a similar occasion.

Sir Edward Newenham. It gives me real concern to oppose the Right Hon. and Right Rev. delegate's motions, because I know his virtuous and independent principles; as a volunteer, I reverence his ideas; I agree to the facts as he states them; but as I am an advocate for a Reform, I would not provide arguments for our enemies, to use against the general cause. Let us despise the malevolence and ingratitude of our enemies, and take a proper hour of

retaliation; I earnestly entreat he will withdraw them. The world knows his intentions are for the good of Ireland: he is a splendid example of Roman virtue; though an Englishman—he is an *Irish Reformer*.

Mr. *Edgeworth*, after complimenting his lordship, adverted to the Dungannon resolution that had been quoted, and insisted, that if it ever had been binding, it must continue so at present, without being renewed; he was fully assured of the steadiness of that assembly, and could not believe that its spirit had diminished from its first institution; their situation indeed had changed—for England is at peace; time, however, and perseverance, would accomplish their desire, and if their enemies could not provoke them to intemperate resentment, they would be defeated in every other attempt to counteract them. Policy, not passion, should dictate their resolutions, and they should wait with firmness and composure for that time and chance, which happens as well to nations as to men.

At the desire of several gentlemen, Lord Bristol withdrew his motion.

Mr. *Hackett* said, that in compliance with the sense of the Convention, he would not take notice of what fell from individuals in the House of Commons; but that the public acts which appeared upon the journals of the House and were printed in their votes, were proper subjects for the consideration of that assembly. That two things had been resolved upon on Saturday night, besides the denial of admission of the bill of reform. One was a declaration that the House would support its rights against encroachments; and the other, that an address should be presented to the King, expressive of a determination to preserve the Constitution inviolate. That he would not suppose these resolutions respected the Volunteers; that looking back a few pages in the Journals, the thanks of Parliament to that body were to be found, and that nothing had been done to forfeit the high opinion which Parliament entertained of their services.—That he would suppose those resolutions respected that encroachment upon, and violation of the rights and constitution of Parliament, which the Convention and the nation complained of—the encroachment of corrupt influence. That the resolutions were an admission

of the necessity of the Reform; that he hoped the Volunteers would ever be found at the back of Parliament, to support its virtuous exertions, and to afford it protection. That the Convention ought to strengthen the resolutions of Parliament, and co-operate in rescuing it from its state of corruption and dependence; that Parliament had not been explicit in declaring *whence* the alarming encroachments were to be apprehended; but Convention might supply that, and not leave the matter to implication. He said he would propose two resolutions in the same words of those which had passed the House of Commons, with an addition only of what might explain the cause of the apprehensions of that House. He then proposed the following resolutions:

Resolved, That in our opinion, it is now become indispensably necessary for the people of this kingdom to declare that they will support their own just rights and privileges, and connected with, and inseparable from, the just rights and privileges of both Houses of Parliament, against the encroachment of corrupt influence, which is increasing and ought to be diminished.

Resolved, That in our opinion an humble Address ought to be presented to his Majesty, from the people of this kingdom, assuring him, that they enjoy the most perfect satisfaction and happiness under his most auspicious government; and that they think it incumbent on them at this time to declare, that they are ready to sacrifice their lives and fortunes to preserve the principles of the constitution inviolate from the gross abuses of election and representation.

Mr. Lytton was of opinion, that it would be too precipitate to enter into these resolutions.

Mr. Edgeworth entreated the Convention to return to their reason, and not to yield to a sudden emotion of popular applause. They should pursue the wise and prudent line of conduct which they had marked out for themselves in the morning; that to insinuate what they might declare, was unworthy and unfit for armed men; either they should act with hostility or not; if they should not, why speak obliquely what it is not prudent to speak at all? They had determined upon silence, not from fear, but from moderation, and whilst they held that ground, they might ensure success. The envious intention of their enemies

was to provoke them to quit it; and if they did, they would lose every advantage they had gained, for a momentary gratification of resentment. The sword of Damocles suspended over the head of a tyrant, was not an object of such terror to his breast as the consciousness of guilt; that assembly was conscious of pure intentions, and whilst it preserved the magnanimous disdain which it had shown for private apostacy and public corruption, it would command the respect even of its enemies.

Mr. *Hackett* defended the resolutions. We are called upon to act with spirit: these resolutions have been termed hostile; I admit they are hostile, but to whom, to corruption and venality; and with a manly fortitude declared he would not withdraw his resolutions.

Mr. *Flood* admitted the principle of the resolutions, but he thought there was too much ingenuity in them. He would not consent that they should be withdrawn; it would be unbecoming our dignity to consent to withdraw them, and shewing that we acted from a principle of fear. He moved that no question be put on these resolutions.

Mr. *Brownlow*, and several other gentlemen, coincided in the principle of the resolutions, but that it would not be advisable to pass them at this time.

The resolutions were not withdrawn, but there was no question put on them.

The question of adjournment, *sine die*, was moved for by Mr. *Stewart*; but several gentlemen objected to this mode of concluding the business, and it was rather hasty and indelicate; that two hours to-morrow would put an end to the whole, and it might be concluded with that solemnity that the importance of the meeting required.

Mr. *Stewart* insisted on the question being put, when there were,

For adjourning <i>sine die</i> ,	—	28
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Against it,	—	98
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The question was then put for adjourning till to-morrow at ten o'clock, and carried in the affirmative.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1783.

EARL CHARLEMONT having taken the Chair, and the roll being called,

Mr. Flood observed, that as the Convention had still retained an impression of the conduct of a certain assembly on its mind, it was necessary it should rid itself of that pressure. In this country, the conduct of the Volunteers did not stand in need of any vindication, as their actions could stand the test of the utmost scrutiny; but in England the case might be different where they could have but few advocates, and attempts had been already made to misrepresent their views. For these reasons, he thought it necessary for the Convention to agree to an address to his Majesty, to remove any suspicion that the royal breast might entertain of the purity of their intentions. He said, it contained the substance of Mr. Hacket's resolutions; and was free from what had been objected to in them by some gentlemen; at the same time, he said, he hoped Mr. Hacket would permit it to stand in the place of his resolutions. He then moved the address, the purport of which was,

That his Majesty's most loyal subjects, the delegates of all the Volunteers of Ireland, begged leave to approach his Majesty's Throne with all humility.

To express their zeal for his Majesty's person, family, and government, and their inviolable attachment to the perpetual connection of his Majesty's Crown of this kingdom with that of Great Britain.

To offer to his Majesty their lives and fortunes in support of his Majesty's rights, and of the glory and prosperity of the British empire.

To assert, with an humble but an honest confidence, that the Volunteers of Ireland did, without expence to the public, protect his Majesty's kingdom of Ireland against his foreign enemies, at a time when the remains of his Majesty's forces in this country were not adequate to that service.

To state that through their means the laws and police of this kingdom had been better executed and maintained, than at any former period within the memory of man.

And to implore his Majesty, that their humble wish to have certain manifest perversions of the Parliamentary Representations of this kingdom, remedied by the Legislature in some reasonable degree, might not be imputed to any spirit of innovation in them, but to a sober and laudable desire to upho'd the constitution, to confirm the satisfaction of their fellow subjects, and to perpetuate the cordial union of both kingdoms.

Mr. *Hackett* seconded the motion. He said it contained the substance of what he had the honour to offer the evening before; and that he would not persist in urging his resolutions, if the address should be agreed to.

Sir *Edward Newenham* said, we have been treated in an hostile manner—other addresses have been passed in other places, and they may misrepresent us; if they do, we ought to do away the misrepresentation;—his Majesty has seen the resolutions of both Houses of Parliament, in the beginning of this session, thanking the Volunteers; therefore it will be natural for him to enquire (when he receives the address of the Lords and Commons of Saturday last,) what is become of my loyal subjects, the Volunteers? Are they silent, when both my faithful Houses of Parliament think the nation in danger? I am for the address as it vindicates my brethren against the unjust and malevolent attack made on their character.

Lord *Farnham* and Mr. *O'Hara* made some objections, but they were answered by Mr. *Flood*, Mr. *Stewart*, Lord *Bristol* and others.

Mr. *Bagenal* begged leave to make a motion, this he thought absolutely necessary; he had the authority of the great Washington for it, whose observation he would beg leave to read first.

“The militia of this country he considered as the palladium of our society, and the first effectual resort in case of hostilities; it is essential therefore, that the same system should pervade the whole, and that the same species of arms, accoutrements, &c. should be introduced. No one who has not learned it from experience, can conceive the difficulty, expence and confusion which result from a contrary system, or the vague arrangements that hitherto prevailed.”

He then read this motion “that the Generals of the Volunteer Army be requested to give notice what sort of arms and accoutrements they will expect the heavy and light horse, battalion and light infantry should appear in, and what plan of review they will adopt for next summer.

Which was not seconded.

On the question being put, the address was agreed to, Lord Farnham and Mr. O'Hara only dissenting.

The following resolutions were agreed to :

Resolved unanimously, *That the necessity of a Parliamentary Reform is manifest, and that we do exhort the nation, by every constitutional effort, to effectuate such reform.*

Resolved, *That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty from this Convention, as the Delegates of all the Volunteers of Ireland, and that Colonel Flood, and the Right Honourable Lieutenant Colonel William Brownlow, or either of them, do present the same.*

A copy of an address to his majesty being then produced and read,

Resolved, *That said Address be agreed to, and adopted the Address of this Convention.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the thanks of this Convention be given to his Excellency James Earl of Charlemont, for his eminent services in the chair.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the thanks of this Convention be presented to the Right Honourable Lieutenant Colonel William Brownlow, Chairman of the Grand Committee, for his strict propriety in the chair.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the thanks of this Convention be presented to the Right Honourable Colonel Robert Stewart, Chairman of the Sub-Committee, for his strict propriety in the chair.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the thanks of this Convention be given to the Earl of Bristol, for his constant attachment to the Volunteers of Ireland, and his early and decided conduct in favour of a Parliamentary Reform.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the thanks of this Convention be given to Colonel Flood.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the thanks of this Convention be given to James Dawson, and John Talbot Askenhurst, Esqrs. for their faithful and zealous services as Secretaries.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the thanks of this Convention be given to Henry Gudgeon, Esq; Adjutant General of Leinster, for his extraordinary pains and attention, during the sittings of this Convention.*

Resolved unanimously, *That the thanks of this Convention be given to the Volunteer Corps of the County and City of Dub-*

lin, who lined the streets on the 10th day of November, 1783, and who have mounted guard during the sittings of this Convention.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Convention be given to the Governors of the Lying-in Hospital, for their politeness in granting the use of the Rotunda for the sittings of the Convention, and then the Convention adjourned sine die.

Signed by Order,

J. T. ASHENHURST, } Secretaries.
JAMES DAWSON, }



A
L I S T
O F T H E
D E L E G A T E S
W H O C O M P O S E D T H E
G R A N D N A T I O N A L C O N V E N T I O N .

Those Members who never took their seats in the Convention, are in Italics.

*Thus marked * were confined by illness, and could not attend their duty in the Convention.*

Thus marked † opposed the Plan of Reform in the Convention.

Thus marked ‡ appeared luke-warm in the Convention.

*Thus marked ** relinquished their patronage of rotten boroughs for the public benefit.*

P R O V I N C E O F U L S T E R .

C O U N T Y O F A N T R I M .

R IGHT Hon. Col. John O'Neill, Honourable Colonel Row- ley,	Lieutenant Colonel Shar- man, Colonel T. Morris Jones, Captain Todd Jones.
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C O U N T Y O F T H E T O W N O F C A R R I C K F E R G U S .

Reverend Mr. Bruce,	Mr. Henry Joy, junior.
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COUNTY OF ARMAGH.

General Earl of Charle-	Lieutenant Colonel Right
mont, **	Hon. William Brownlow,
Colonel Right Honourable	Lieutenant Colonel Sir Wil-
Sir Capel Molyneux, Ba-	liam Synnott,
ronet,	Captain James Dawson.

COUNTY OF DERRY.

Lord Bishop of Derry	Colonel Right Honourable
<i>Colonel Right Honourable Tho-</i>	Edward Carey,
<i>mas Conolly,</i>	Captain Ferguson.
Captain Leckey,	

COUNTY OF CAVAN.

Captain F. Saunderfon,	Honourable J. J. Maxwell,
Lord Farnham †,	Captain Henry Clements.
General G. Montgomery,	

COUNTY OF DOWN.

Colonel Right Honourable	Major Crawford,
Robert Stewart,	Colonel Patrick Savage,
Captain Mathew Forde, ju-	Captain Gawn Hamilton.
nior,	

COUNTY OF FERMANAGH.

Colonel Irvine,	Jason Hazard, Esq;
Col. Sir A Brooke, Bt.	Captain James Armstrong.
Capt. A. C. Hamilton,	

COUNTY OF DONEGALL.

Col. A. Montgomery,	Col. Robert M'Clintock,
Col. John Hamilton,	Lieutenant Colonel Charles
Lieut. Col. A. Stewart,	Nesbitt.

COUNTY OF MONAGHAN.

Col. Char. Pow. Leslie,	Captain William Forster,
Colonel Francis Lucas,	Captain James Hamilton.
Col. J. Montgomery,	

COUNTY OF TYRONE.

Colonel Stewart,	Lieut. Col. Charleton,
Lt. Col. Montgomery,	Captain Eccles.
Col. James Alexander,	

P R O V I N C E O F C O N N A U G H T.

C O U N T Y O F G A L W A Y.

Colonel Perse, Edmond Kirwan, Esq; Peter D'Arcy, Esq;		Major William Burke, Colonel Walter Lambert.
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C O U N T Y O F L E I T R I M.

Colonel Latouche, <i>Colonel Tenison,</i> <i>Colonel Peyton,</i>		Colonel Cullen, <i>Colonel Crofton.</i>
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C O U N T Y O F M A Y O.

Col. Sir H. L. Blosse, Bartt. Col. Dom. G. Browne, Valentia Blake, Esq;		Col. Edmond Jordan, Colonel Patrick Randell M'Donnell.
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C O U N T Y O F R O S C O M M O N.

Colonel Arthur French, Captain Edward Crofton, Colonel Maurice Mahon,		Colonel Christopher Lyfter, Counsellor Dennis Kelly.
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C O U N T Y O F S L I G O.

Rt. Hon. Gen. Hen. King, Right Hon. Joshua Cocper, Colonel O'Hara, †		Robert Lyons, Esq; Major George Dodwell.
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C O U N T Y O F T H E T O W N O F G A L W A Y.

Colonel Flood, ** Counsellor Blossett, Lieutenant Colonel French,		Major Browne, Counsellor Martin Kirwan.
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P R O V I N C E O F L E I N S T E R.

C O U N T Y O F C A R L O W.

Colonel Bagenal, Lieutenant Col. Sir Charles Barton, Bart.		Colonel Rochfort, Captain Stewart, Reverend Mr. Ryan.
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A LIST OF THE

COUNTY OF THE CITY OF DUBLIN.

Colonel Sir Edward Newen-	Captain Warren,
ham, Kmt.	Captain Cornwall,
Lieutenant Colonel Gray-	Benjamin Wills, Esq;
don,	

COUNTY OF DUBLIN.

Colonel Sir J. A. Johnston,	Colonel Joseph Deane,
Bart.	Captain Baker,
Colonel Sir J. S. Tynte, Bt.	Major Verschöyle.

COUNTY OF THE TOWN OF DROGHEDA.

Colonel Wm. Meade Ogle,	Colonel H. M. Lyons.
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QUEEN'S COUNTY.

Colonel John Warburton,	Colonel Charles White,
Colonel Joseph Palmer,	Captain James Stephens.
Colonel Luke Flood,	

COUNTY OF LOUTH.

Lieutenant Colonel Thomas	Captain Thomas Read,
Lee,	Lieutenant J. Wm. Foster,
Major William Sheil,	Captain Zach. Maxwell.

COUNTY OF MEATH.

Colonel Baron Dillon,	Captain Ruxton.
Captain Forbes,	Captain Finlay.
Captain Trotter,	

COUNTY OF WICKLOW.

Colonel Westby,	Colonel Saunders,
Colonel Hayes,	Colonel the Earl of Aldbo-
Colonel Nixon,	rough.**

COUNTY OF WESTMEATH.

Honourable Colonel Roch-	Lieutenant Colonel William
fort,	Thomas Smyth,
Captain Lyons,	Colonel Clibborn.*
Honourable Captain Moore,	

D E L E G A T E S.

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COUNTY OF KILDARE.

John Wolfe, Esq;	Maurice Keating, Esq;
Honourable John Bourke,	Michael Aylmer, Esq;
Richard Neville, Esq;	

COUNTY OF WEXFORD.

General George Ogle, †	Richard Neville, Esq;
Sir Vesey Colclough, Bt. **	Colonel Hatton. †
Lord Viscount Valentia,	

COUNTY OF LONGFORD.

R. L. Edgeworth, Esq;	Colonel Sir William Gleadowe Newcomen, Bart.
Major Fox,	Colonel Nesbitt.
Major Sandys, *	

KING'S COUNTY.

General Sir William Parsons, Bart.	Colonel Jonathan Darby,
Colonel John Lloyd,	Colonel James Francis Rolleston.
Colonel C. W. Bury,	

COUNTY OF KILKENNY.

Lieutenant Colonel Knareborough,	Captain Helfham,
Major Wemys,	Captain Elliott,
	Counsellor Lockington.

COUNTY OF THE CITY OF KILKENNY.

Colonel Thomas Butler,	Lieutenant Colonel Mossom.
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PROVINCE OF MUNSTER.

COUNTY OF CORK.

Right Hon. Lord Kingsborough,	Sir John Conw. Colthurst, Bart.
Fr. Bernard, Esq; **	Major Thomas Fitzgerald.
Colonel Roche,	

COUNTY OF THE CITY OF CORK.

Colonel Bousfield,	Richard Fitton, Esq;
Colonel Bagwell,	Colonel R. Longfield.
Richard Moore, Esq;	

COUNTY OF CLARE.

Colonel Sir H. Dillon Maf-	Colonel Blood,
fey, Bart.	Major Stackpole,
Colonel Edward Fitzge-	Colonel Francis Macna-
rald,	mara.

COUNTY OF KERRY.

General Sir Barry Denny,	Colonel Gunn,
Bart.	Robert Day, Esq; ‡
Richard Townsend Herbert,	Colonel Mahony.
Esq;	

COUNTY OF LIMERICK.

Honourable Colonel Hugh	Colonel John Fitzgerald,
Maffey,**	Major Powell,
Colonel Richard Bourke,	Major Croker.

COUNTY OF THE CITY OF LIMERICK.

Colonel Thomas Smyth,	Major Hart,*
Colonel Edmond H. Pery.	Henry D'Esterre, Esq;
Colonel Prendergast,	

COUNTY OF TIPPERARY.

Thomas Hackett, Esq;	Colonel Sir William Barker,
Colonel Daniel Toler,	Captain Alleyn.
Major Edward Moore,	

COUNTY OF WATERFORD.

John Congreve, Esq;	S. J. Newport, Esq;
Sir Richard Musgrave,	John Kaine, Esq;
Thomas Christmases, Esq;	

COUNTY OF THE CITY OF WATERFORD.

Captain Rob. S. Carew,	Counsellor William Morris,
Captain H. Alcock,	Captain Dobbyn.
Captain Bolton,	

S T A T E
OF THE
BOROUGH-REPRESENTATION
IN IRELAND.

COUNTY OF ANTRIM

CONTAINS 110,920 inhabitants, 3500 whereof are electors, with five boroughs, *viz.*

Antrim, contains 1500 inhabitants; the right of suffrage or return of members is vested in the Protestant inhabitants at large, commonly called Potwalloppers, at present about 250.—The Earl of Masseline Proprietor of the Soil.

Belfast, 15000 inhabitants; the electors consist of a Sovereign and 12 Burgesses, 5 of whom only are resident.—The Earl of Donegall Patron.

Lisburn, 2500 inhabitants.—Electors, the Protestant inhabitants at large, or Potwalloppers, consisting of about 400.—The Earl of Hertford Proprietor of the Soil.

Ramsgalloway, 500 inhabitants.—Electors, the Protestant inhabitants at large, or Potwalloppers, about 80.—The Right Hon. John O'Neill Proprietor of the Soil.

County of the Town of Carrickfergus 3225 inhabitants.—Electors, 900, being the Freemen and Freeholders; and most of the inhabitants are made free when at age.—Proprietor of the Soil the Earl of Donegall.

STATE OF THE

COUNTY OF ARMAGH

Contains 84000 inhabitants, 2400 whereof are electors, with two boroughs, *viz.*

Armagh contains 515 families; electors, a Sovereign and 12 Burgesses—His Grace the Primate, Patron.

Charlemont contains 90 families; electors a Pottrieve and 12 Burgesses.—His Excellency General Earl Charlemont, Patron, who sacrificed his claim of patronage at the shrine of public freedom in Convention.

COUNTY OF CARLOW

Contains 34,176 inhabitants, and two boroughs, *viz.*

Carlow, about 4000 inhabitants; electors, a Sovereign and 12 Burgesses.—William Burton, Esq; Patron.

Old Leighlin; electors a Bailiff and 12 Burgesses, all Clergymen and non-residents.—The Bishop of Leighlin and Ferns, Patron.

COUNTY OF CAVAN

Contains 68,000 inhabitants, 1850 whereof are Freeholders, with 2 boroughs, namely,

Belturbet contains about 500 inhabitants; electors, a Provost and 12 Burgesses, very few of which are residents.—Lord Belmore, Patron.

N. B. This claim of patronage was lately purchased from the Earl of Lanesborough for 8700l. and at another sale is said to have brought 11,000l.

Cavan 700 inhabitants; electors, a Sovereign, 12 Burgesses and honorary Freemen; very few residents.—The Clements and Nesbitts, Patrons.

COUNTY OF CLARE

Contains 66,000 inhabitants, 1000 whereof are Freeholders, and 848 polled at last elections, with one borough, *viz.*

Ennis, about 7000 inhabitants; electors, a Provost and 12 Burgesses.—Patrons, Lord Conyngham and Sir Lucius O'Brien; a *venal* and *rotten* borough, having been sold in the last and present Parliaments.

COUNTY OF CORK

Contains 250,000 inhabitants, near 3000 whereof are Freeholders, with 11 boroughs, *viz.*

Youghall has a Mayor, Bailiffs, Burgesses, and Freemen, most of the latter residing in Carbery, 60 miles from Youghall. No Freemen have been latterly made. The Mayor and majority of the Burgesses who elect, are under the influence of Lord Shannon.

Castle-Martyr, a very small town; electors, a Portrieve and 12 Burgesses, mostly non-residents.—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron Lord Shannon.

Middleton, a very small town; electors, a Portrieve and 12 Burgesses, 7 whereof are only extant.—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Lord Viscount Middleton.

Rathcormuck, a very small town; electors, the Protestant inhabitants at large, 7 whereof only voted on last election, except those resident in one street lying in its center, which, by a former Parliament, was voted out of the town, but in defiance of which vote, the said street maintains its situation, though it could not its privileges.

Mallow; electors the Freeholders of the manor, containing about 2000 acres, but most of the voters reside within the town; the property of the soil in various hands.—Principal Patrons, the Jephson Family.

Doneraile; electors the *mesne* Freeholders of the manor, containing about 2000 acres—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Lord Doneraile.

Charleville, a large and populous town; but none of the inhabitants permitted to vote; electors were formerly a Sovereign, 12 Burgesses and Freemen, but there are now only five Burgesses in being, which constitute the voters.—Patron was Earl of Cork, but the claim of patronage or nomination is said to have been lately sold to Lord Shannon.

Kinsale, a sea-port town; electors, a Provost, 12 Burgesses and Freemen, most of whom reside in the Province of Ulster—the Patron being Lord Clifford.

Bandon-bridge, about 7000 inhabitants; electors, a Sovereign, 12 Burgesses, 12 Common-council, and about 50 Freemen.—Patrons, the Duke of Devonshire and Mr. Bernard, which latter sacrificed his claim at the altar of public freedom in Convention.

Cloughnakilty; electors, Burgesses and Freemen, five whereof only voted at last election.—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Lord Shannon.

Baltimore, a very small poor town; electors, Protestant inhabitants at large, commonly called Potwallopers, being tenants at will, and the last election being a contested one, only eleven voted.—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Sir John Freke, Bart. There was formerly a charter to this borough, which the late Sir John Freke destroyed.

County of the City of Cork, which as to extent is a circle, the diameter whereof is six miles, consequently the circumference 18 miles. The franchise of returning members to Parliament is vested in the Freemen and Freeholders. Every eldest son of a freeman is entitled to his freedom on attaining the age of twenty-one years.

Every person who has served seven years to a freeman is also entitled. There is vested in a particular body of men, called the Common-council, a right of originating all orders for making new freemen, but such order is not conclusive until approved of by the Freemen in a Court of D'Oyer Hundred; however the Common-council evade this reference to a Court of D'Oyer Hundred, under colour of a bye-law, and claim a right, which they constantly exercise, of admitting to the freedom of the city without the approbation of this court, every man *who is an Esquire*, by which mode of admission several persons, not resident, exercise the franchise of voting for Members of Parliament.

The number of freemen and freeholders who voted on the last election were near 1200, and the number of the inhabitants are at least 100,000.

COUNTY OF DONEGALL

Contains 66,720 inhabitants, 2500 whereof are electors; and the following five boroughs:

St. Johnstown, 150 inhabitants; electors a Provost and twelve Burgesses, all non-residents.—Patron Lord Clonmore.

Lifford, 200 inhabitants; electors, a Provost and twelve Burgesses, all non-residents, except one who is a publican.—Patron, Lord Erne.

Donegall, 300 inhabitants; electors, a Provost and twelve Burgesses, all non-residents, except one.—Patron, Lord Arran.

Ballylannon, 700 inhabitants; electors, a Provost and twelve Burgesses, all non-residents, except one.—Patron, Right Hon. Thomas Conolly.

Killybegs, 300 inhabitants; electors, a Provost and twelve Burgesses, all non-residents.—Patron, Right Hon. William Burton Conyngham.

COUNTY OF DOWN

Contains 27,367 houses; its inhabitants, allowing 5 to each house, 136,835; electors at present registered 6000, but will shortly increase very considerably;—has the following six boroughs:

Bangor, about 500 inhabitants; electors, a Provost and twelve Burgesses, mostly non-residents.—Proprietors of the Soil Lord Bangor and Mr. Ward.—Patrons, Lord Bangor and the Carrick Family.

Downpatrick, 3000 inhabitants; electors, the Protestant inhabitants at large, or Potwalloppers, about 250.—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Lord Clifford.

Hillborough, about 700 inhabitants; electors, a Provost and twelve Burgesses.—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Lord Hillborough.

Newry, inhabitants about 10,000; electors, the Protestant inhabitants at large, or Potwalloppers, being between 600 and 700.—The Proprietors of the Soil, Mr. Needham and Lord Hillsborough.—The Seneschal of the Manor holds the election.

Killeigh, very few inhabitants; electors, a Provost and twelve Burgesses, mostly non-residents.—Proprietors of the Soil Sir John Blackwood and Mr. Hamilton.—Patron, Sir John Blackwood.

Newtown-Ardi, about 1500 inhabitants; electors, a Provost and twelve Burgesses, all non-residents except the Provost.—Proprietor of the Soil Mr. Stewart.—Patron, Mr. Ponsonby.

County of the Town of Drogheda, a large and populous town; the electors are the Freemen and Freeholders, consisting of about 500—a free town.

COUNTY OF DUBLIN

Contains about 56,800 inhabitants, 1200 of whom are Freeholders, and the following boroughs.—N. B. The commissioners of the revenue have a very great share of influence in this county, on account of the many revenue officers they oblige to obtain freeholds.

Swords, governed by a Portrieve, who is the returning officer; the electors the Protestant inhabitants at large, or Potwalloppers, about 160. The elections in this town afford scenes of the greatest corruption; the barony well inhabited by persons of independent properties, and Mr. Beresford's influence (a commissioner of the revenue) generally prevails.

Newcastle, a small town; electors, a Portrieve and twelve Burgesses, for the most part non-residents. The inhabitants have a right to make freemen, which is not exercised.—Patron, J. La Touche, Esq. The barony well inhabited by persons of independent properties.

University of Dublin; electors, 70 Scholars and 22 Fellows, in all 92, who cannot be corrupted, even by the present Provost.

Dublin, about 300,000 inhabitants; electors the Freemen and Freeholders about 4000—a free city. The board of 24 aldermen, who were in general very corrupt, having made several attempts to impose the members, but were successfully opposed by the spirit of the independent citizens.

COUNTY OF FERMANAGH

Contains about 30,000 inhabitants, 2537 whereof polled as Freeholders on last election; has but one borough, namely,

Inniskillen, inhabitants about 1000; the corporation consists of 14 Burgesses, a Provost, a Recorder, and an unlimited number of Freemen, who have *estates in themselves* that go to repair the market-house, pave the streets, &c. but these *freemen* are not permitted to vote; and only two of the burgesses and the provost reside in the town.

COUNTY OF GALWAY

Contains 166,249 inhabitants, about 700 whereof are electors, and the three following boroughs:

Tuam, 3150 inhabitants; electors, a Sovereign and 12 Burgesses—a venal and rotten borough under the patronage of Mr. Bingham.

Atterry, 380 inhabitants; electors, a Portrieve, 12 Burgesses, the Freemen and Freeholders, but there are not now more than two freemen or freeholders, and but one of the burgesses is resident—a very rotten borough under the patronage of Mr. Blakeney.

County of the Town of Galway, 12,600 inhabitants; electors, the Mayor, Sheriffs, 101 Burgesses, 40 Freeholders, 295 Freemen admitted by the mayor on the late election; also 130 under the charter of 29 Car. II. the new rules and the act of 4th Geo. I. commonly known by the name of *The Galway 100 Men*. The influence of Denis Daly, of Dunsandle, and Denis Bowes Daly, Esq; has latterly become so great as to give them a patronage over this town, which is in every other respect truly independent.

COUNTY OF KERRY

Contains about 75,000 inhabitants, 1000 whereof are electors, and the three following boroughs:

Ardfert, a borough by *prescription*, not 100 inhabitants; electors, a Portrieve, 12 Burgesses and honorary Freemen, in all at present 18.—The Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Lord Glendore.

Dingle, an antient borough by *prescription*, but accepted a charter from James I. 800 inhabitants; electors, under that charter, a Sovereign, 12 Burgesses and honorary Freemen, in the whole at present 150, two of whom are only resident in the town, and not more than ten in the county.—The Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Mr. Townshend.

Tralee, above 1200 inhabitants; electors a Provost and twelve Burgesses.—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron Sir Barry Denny, Bart.

N. B. This town never sent Members to Parliament until it was incorporated by a charter of James I.

COUNTY OF KILDARE

Contains 49,968 inhabitants, and the following four boroughs:

Athy, 900 inhabitants; electors, a few Burgesses and Freemen: Under the influence of—Patron, Duke of Leinster.

Harristown, totally uninhabited; electors, a few Burgesses and a returning Officer, all of course, not residents.—Patron, Duke of Leinster.

Kildare, 600 inhabitants; electors, twelve Burgesses, a returning Officer, and a few Freemen, under the influence of—Patron, Duke of Leinster.

Noas, 1100 inhabitants; electors a few Burgesses and Freemen, under the influence of—Patron, Lord Mayo.

COUNTY OF KILKENNY

Contains 86,574 inhabitants, 1050 whereof are electors, and the following five Boroughs:

Thomastown, 1000 inhabitants; electors, a Sovereign, Recorder, and two Portrieves, the number of Freemen or Burgesses (if any) not known: a venal rotten Borough, under the immediate influence of—Patron Lord Clifden.

Gowran, 780 inhabitants; electors, a Portrieve, Recorder, and Town Clerk, the number of Freemen and Burgesses (if any) not known: a venal rotten borough, under the influence of—Patron Lord Clifden.

Ennistonge, 500 inhabitants; electors, a Sovereign and 12 Burgesses—Patrons representatives of William Tighe, Esq;

Knocktopher, 200 inhabitants; right of election in the Protestant inhabitants at large or Potwollopers, but only *one* is allowed the privilege to vote—Patron, Sir Hercules Langrishe, Bart.

Callan, 1500 inhabitants; electors cannot at present be ascertained, or the constitution of the borough, the patronage having been long in dispute between Henry Flood, Esq; and the family of the Agars.

County of the City of Kilkenny, 13865 inhabitants; electors, by the old charter, consist of a Mayor, 2 Sheriffs, 18 Aldermen, and the Commons at large; but by a by-law, the Mayor, 2 Sheriffs, 18 Aldermen, and 36 of the Commons, are constituted to do all corporate acts, whereby leading men, by undue influence over the majority of the above-mentioned number, and taking advantage of the said bye-law, have transferred the power of electing members to *strangers and occasional Freemen*; there appearing on the Book Lists of Freemen to the amount of *fourteen Hundred*, of whom Two Hundred only are residents and Freeholders. This city also contains

St. Canice, alias *Irishtown*; 3000 inhabitants; a borough by prescription. Property for the most part held under Bishops leases. Electors, a Portrieve, 12 Burgesses and Freemen. The freeholders or inhabitants are not permitted to vote, and no burgesses or freemen are made but such as are nominated and approved of by—Patron, Bishop of Ossory.

KING'S COUNTY

Contains 48,000 inhabitants, 900 whereof are electors and two boroughs.

Banagher; electors, a Sovereign, 12 Burgeſſes and very few Freemen, under influence of—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Denis Bowes Daly, Eſq;

Phillipstown; electors, a Sovereign, 12 Burgeſſes and a few Freemen, who are made by the Sovereign and Burgeſſes—Proprietors of the Soil, Lords Belvedere and Moleſworth—Patron Lord Belvedere.

COUNTY OF LEITRIM

Contains 35,280 inhabitants, 1076 whereof are electors, and the two following boroughs :

Carrick-on-Shannon, 400 inhabitants; electors, 13 Burgeſſes, all non-reſidents, and who ſupply their own vacancies—Proprietor of the Soil, Colonel St. George—Patron, Lord Leitrim.

N. B. There were Freemen by the Charter, but none of whom are now extant.

Jamesſtown, a wretched depopulated village, formerly a town; electors, 13 Burgeſſes, only one reſident—Proprietor of the Soil, Lord Mountrath—Patrons, Gilbert King, of Charleſtown, and John King, of Folbane, Co. Roſcommon, Eſq;

COUNTY OF LIMERICK

Contains 120,000 inhabitants, 1500 whereof are electors, and the two following venal and rotten boroughs.

Aſkeaton; electors, a Sovereign and 12 Burgeſſes—Patrons, Lord Carrick and the Honourable Hugh Maſſey, which latter ſacrificed his private intereſt on the altar of public liberty, in the Convention.

Kilmallock; electors, a Sovereign and 12 Burgeſſes—Patron, Right Honourable Silver Oliver.

County of the City of Limerick, above 40,000 inhabitants; electors the Freeholders and Freemen, amounting to many hundreds; the Freemen are admitted by the Mayor and Common Council, conſiſting of a great number of Aldermen and Burgeſſes.

COUNTY OF LONDONDERRY

Contains 99,000 inhabitants, and the following boroughs :

Coleraine; electors, a Mayor, 12 Aldermen and 24 Burgeſſes, all non-reſidents, ſave the Mayor—Patrons Earl of Tyrone and Right Honourable Richard Jackſon.

City of Londonderry, electors, 700, conſiſting of a Mayor, Aldermen, Common Council, and Freemen, the latter moſtly abſentees, and made by corporation.

Newtown-Limavady, a venal and rotten borough; electors, 12 Burgeſſes and a returning Officer, all non-reſidents, under the direct influence of—Patron, Right Hon. Thomas Conolly.

COUNTY OF LONGFORD

Contains 40,000 inhabitants, 700 whereof are electors, and four Boroughs.

Longford, electors, a Sovereign, Burgesses and Freemen; the freedom nearly extinct, and burgesses non-residents; a venal borough, entirely at the disposal of—Patron, Lord Longford.

Laneborough, electors, a few Burgesses, mostly non-residents, a venal borough, under the controul of—Patron, Mr. Dillon of Clonbrook.

Granard, a Manor, the electors, about 50 Freemen and Freeholders; a venal borough, under controul of—Proprietors of the Soil and Patrons, Mr. Greville and Mrs. Mc'Cartney.

St. Johnstown, electors, the Burgesses, all non-residents, and Freemen, mostly decayed; a venal borough, at the absolute disposal of—Patron, Lord Granard.

COUNTY OF LOUTH

Contains 46,446 inhabitants, and the following four boroughs:

Dundalk, 5000 inhabitants; electors, 16 Burgesses and 700 Freemen, 100 whereof are disputed with Earl Clanbrassil, who claims the patronage by the remaining 616 electors, who are struggling for their with-held franchises.

Dunleer, 400 inhabitants; electors, a Portrieve, 12 Burgesses and about 30 Freemen, under the influence of—Patrons, Right Hon. John Foster, and Henry Coddington, Esq.

Ardee, 2500 inhabitants; electors, a Portrieve, 24 Burgesses, and above 80 Freemen and Common Council. This borough often contested, but the patronage now pretty well established in John and Charles Ruxton, Esqrs.

Carlingford, 1200 inhabitants; electors, a Portrieve, 12 Burgesses, and some Freemen and Common Council, pretty similar to Ardee.—Patrons, Robert Ross and Ross Moore, Esqrs.

COUNTY OF MAYO

Contains 120,084 inhabitants, 1000 whereof are electors, and one borough.

Castlebar, 4230 inhabitants; electors, a Portrieve and 12 Burgesses, all non-residents.—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Lord Lucan.

COUNTY OF MEATH

Contains 46,900 inhabitants, 1200 whereof are electors, and 6 boroughs.

Trim, 2000 inhabitants; electors, a Sovereign, twelve Burgesses, and about 300 Freemen, under the direct influence of—Patron, Lord Mornington.

Abboy, 1200 inhabitants; a manor town, the property of Lord Darnley; the tenants of the manor only have votes, and the Darnley family always appoint the Returning Officer; a venal borough, although Sir B. Chapman claims some share in the nomination.

Kells, 2500 inhabitants; electors, a Sovereign, a few Burgesses and Freemen, the whole very small, under the immediate direction of Proprietor of the Soil and—Patron, Lord Bective.

Navan, 2500 inhabitants; electors, a Portrieve, 12 Burgesses and 60 or 70 Freemen, nine whereof only polled on last election.—Patrons, Lord Ludlow, and Mr. Preston of Ballinter.

Ratoath, 400 inhabitants; electors, Freeholders of the manor.—Patron, and principal Proprietor of the Soil, Gorges Lowther Esq.

Duleek, electors, a Portrieve, Burgesses, and Freemen; in all not thirteen, and none of which reside in either that town or county; a venal rotten borough.—Proprietor of the Soil, Thomas Trotter, Esq; but—Patron, Abel Ram, Esq.

COUNTY OF MONAGHAN

Contains 99,225 inhabitants, a considerable number whereof are electors, and one borough.

Monaghan, 1975 inhabitants; electors, a Provost who resides, and 12 Burgesses, all non-residents; a venal borough—Patrons, Lord Clermont and Lady Blaney.

QUEEN'S COUNTY

Contains 70,000 inhabitants, 1400 whereof are electors, and three boroughs.

Ballinakill, 1200 inhabitants; electors, 12 Burgesses, two of whom are residents; there are also a few Freemen still extant, who are entitled but not permitted to vote.—Proprietor of the Soil Lord Stanhope.—Patron, Lord Drogheda.

Portarlington, 3000 inhabitants; electors, 12 Burgesses, a Returning Officer, and about 50 Freemen mostly non-residents.—Proprietor and Patron, Lord Carlow.

Maryborough, 1200 inhabitants; electors, a Mayor, two Bailiffs, 12 Burgesses, and about 350 Freemen mostly non-residents; and under the influence of—Patrons, the Revd. Dean Coote and Sir John Parnell, Bart.

COUNTY OF ROSCOMMON

Contains 40,000 inhabitants, and the three following boroughs:

S T A T E
OF THE
BOROUGH-REPRESENTATION
IN IRELAND.

COUNTY OF ANTRIM

CONTAINS 110,920 inhabitants, 3500 whereof are electors, with five boroughs, *viz.*

Antrim, contains 1500 inhabitants; the right of suffrage or return of members is vested in the Protestant inhabitants at large, commonly called Potwalloppers, at present about 250.—The Earl of Masserine Proprietor of the Soil.

Belfast, 15000 inhabitants; the electors consist of a Sovereign and 12 Burgesses, 5 of whom only are resident.—The Earl of Donegall Patron.

Lisburn, 2500 inhabitants.—Electors, the Protestant inhabitants at large, or Potwalloppers, consisting of about 400.—The Earl of Hertford Proprietor of the Soil.

Randalstown, 500 inhabitants.—Electors, the Protestant inhabitants at large, or Potwalloppers, about 80.—The Right Hon. John O'Neill Proprietor of the Soil.

County of the Town of Carrickfergus 3225 inhabitants.—Electors, 900, being the Freemen and Freeholders; and most of the inhabitants are made free when at age.—Proprietor of the Soil the Earl of Donegall.

Tallagh, had a charter for a Sovereign, Recorder, and 24 Burgesses, 10th James I. by which the liberties were extended a mile and a half round the church every way; the corporation is long gone into disuse, though it is by this charter the right of sending representatives is given; it is a manor, the electors Potwallopers, and before the decision of the House of Commons, Freeholders within the manor exercised right of suffrage—on the last election, which was contested, 96 electors voted. The Seneschal of the manor, appointed by the Duke of Devonshire, is a Returning Officer. Inhabitants above 1000—supposed Patron, Lord Shannon.

Lisimore, is a manor; number of electors, supposed to be about 50, but not contested these very many years; right of election in Potwallopers and Freeholders within the manor; number of inhabitants above 600; Seneschal of the manor appointed by the Duke of Devonshire, is Returning Officer, and same man is Seneschal for Lisimore and Tallagh.—Supposed Patron, Duke of Devonshire.

Dungarvan, is a manor; had a Sovereign, Recorder and 12 Burgesses, yearly chosen by charter, James I. but refused; right of election in Potwallopers and Freeholders of the manor—in all about 120; number of inhabitants about 2000; the seneschal appointed by the Duke of Devonshire, is Returning Officer—Supposed Patron, Lord Tyrone.

County of the City of Waterford, 40,000 inhabitants; electors, 1000, being Freemen and Freeholders; one half of whom are foreigners; their Charter under Car. II; the Corporation, 17 Aldermen, out of whom a Mayor is chosen, and 23 Assistants or Common Council, out of whom two Sheriffs are chosen; the Corporation exercises a power of making Freemen at will: by the Charter, all Sons, Sons-in-law, and Apprentices of Freemen, are entitled to their freedom, and the usage supports the Charter. The liberties of the City extend in length about 5 miles, in breadth about 4 miles; a large part of the property of the Soil is in the Corporation, which sets for terms of 999 years.

COUNTY OF WESTMEATH

Contains 70350 inhabitants, 1120 whereof are electors, and four boroughs.

Athlone, a large town; electors, a Sovereign, Burgesses and Freemen, in all between 400 and 500, under the influence of Patrons, Sir Richard St. George, and Dean Handcock.

Fore, a venal rotten borough; electors, a Returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, under the absolute direction of—Patron, Lord Westmeath.

Kilbeggan, a venal rotten borough; electors, a returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, under command of—Patron, Charles Lambert, Esq;

BOROUGH-REPRESENTATION. 155

Mullingar, a large town; electors, a Seneschal, and Freeholders of the Manor—only *one* resident, and but 12 permitted to vote by—Patron, Lord Granard.

COUNTY OF WEXFORD

Contains 77628 inhabitants, a great number whereof are electors, and eight boroughs.

Bannow retains *only the name*, being totally *uninhabited*; the electors, a returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses nominated by—Patron, Mr. Loftus, the representative of Lord Ely.

Clonmines, a decayed and rotten borough; electors, a returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, all non-residents, being the same who are the electors for Bannow—Patron, Mr. Loftus.

Featbard, a venal, rotten borough; electors, a returning Officer and 12 Burgesses, all non-residents, being the *same 13 men* who return for Bannow and Clonmines, so that 13 domestics, or persons dependent on the will of Mr. Loftus, and nominated by him, depute six members to serve in Parliament from an opulent and respectable county, wherein they are not perhaps acquainted, or possess one shilling property. This must be a burlesque on all representation—Patron, Mr. Loftus.

Enniscorthy, 700 inhabitants; electors, a returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, only *one* resident—Patron, Sir Vesey Colclough, Bart. who sacrificed his interest therein on the altar of public freedom.

Corey, electors, a returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, a venal, corrupt, and rotten borough, under the direction of—Patron, Stephen Ram, Esq;

New Ross, a large town, electors, a returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, with a right of making an unlimited number of freemen, but venal and rotten, under the influence of—Patrons, Mr. Leigh, and Charles Tottenham, Esq;

Tagbman, a corrupt venal, and rotten borough; electors, a returning Officer and 12 Burgesses, under command of—Patron, Mr. Hoare.

Wexford, a large and populous trading town; electors, a Mayor, 2 Bailiffs, 24 Burgesses, and 800 or 900 Freemen—ought to be a free town; but by manœuvring in the corporation, it is retained as a kind of rotten borough, under the influence of—Richard Neville, Esq; and a few others.

COUNTY OF WICKLOW

Contains 56,532 inhabitants, 900 whereof are electors, and four boroughs, namely,

Baltinglass, 960 inhabitants; electors, of whom are resident only three, a Sovereign, Recorder, Town Clerk, 12 Burgesses, and

Tallagh, had a charter for a Sovereign, Recorder, and 24 Burgesses, 10th James I. by which the liberties were extended a mile and a half round the church every way; the corporation is long gone into disuse, though it is by this charter the right of sending representatives is given; it is a manor, the electors Potwalloppers, and before the decision of the House of Commons, Freeholders within the manor exercised right of suffrage—on the last election, which was contested, 96 electors voted. The Seneschal of the manor, appointed by the Duke of Devonshire, is a Returning Officer. Inhabitants above 1000—supposed Patron, Lord Shannon.

Lisimore, is a manor; number of electors, supposed to be about 50, but not contested these very many years; right of election in Potwalloppers and Freeholders within the manor; number of inhabitants above 600; Seneschal of the manor appointed by the Duke of Devonshire, is Returning Officer, and same man is Seneschal for Lisimore and Tallagh.—Supposed Patron, Duke of Devonshire.

Dungarvan, is a manor; had a Sovereign, Recorder and 12 Burgesses, yearly chosen by charter, James I. but refused; right of election in Potwalloppers and Freeholders of the manor—in all about 120; number of inhabitants about 2000; the seneschal appointed by the Duke of Devonshire, is Returning Officer—Supposed Patron, Lord Tyrone.

County of the City of Waterford, 40,000 inhabitants; electors, 1000, being Freemen and Freeholders; one half of whom are foreigners; their Charter under Car. II; the Corporation, 17 Aldermen, out of whom a Mayor is chosen, and 23 Assistants or Common Council, out of whom two Sheriffs are chosen; the Corporation exercises a power of making Freemen at will: by the Charter, all Sons, Sons-in-law, and Apprentices of Freemen, are entitled to their freedom, and the usage supports the Charter. The liberties of the City extend in length about 5 miles, in breadth about 4 miles; a large part of the property of the Soil is in the Corporation, which sets for terms of 999 years.

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Fere, a venal rotten borough; electors, a Returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, under the absolute direction of—Patron, Lord Westmeath.

Kilbeggan, a venal rotten borough; elector, and 12 Burgesses, under command of Lambert, Esq;

BOROUGH-REPRESENTATION. 155

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Enniscorthy, 700 inhabitants; electors, a returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, only *one* resident—Patron, Sir Vesey Colclough, Bart. who sacrificed his interest therein on the altar of public freedom.

Gorey, electors, a returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, a venal, corrupt, and rotten borough, under the direction of—Patron, Stephen Ram, Esq;

New Ross, a large town, electors, a returning Officer, and 12 Burgesses, with a right of making an unlimited number of freemen, but venal and rotten, under the influence of—Patrons, Mr. Leigh, and Charles Tottenham, Esq;

Taghman, a corrupt venal, and rotten borough; electors, a returning Officer and 12 Burgesses, under command of—Patron, Mr. Hoare.

Wexford, a large and populous trading town; electors, a Mayor, 2 Bailiffs, 24 Burgesses, and 800 or 900 Freemen—ought to be a free town; but by manœuvring in the corporation, it is retained as a kind of rotten borough, under the influence of—Richard Neville, Esq; and a few others.

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Contains 56,532 inhabitants, 900 whereof are electors, and four boroughs, namely,

Baltinglass, 960 inhabitants; electors, of whom are resident only three, a Sovereign, Recorder, Town Clerk, 12 Burgesses, and

an unlimited number of Free Commons, but at present, do not exceed 20.—Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Lord Aldborough, who, following the example of Lord Charlemont, Colonels Mafsey, Flood, Bernard, &c. nobly sacrificed his private interest at the shrine of public liberty.

Wicklow, a sea-port town, 800 inhabitants; electors, a Portrieve, and 12 Burgeses, there are also an indeterminate number of *Fremen*, who are not permitted to vote——Patron, representatives of the late William Tighe, Esq.

Carysfort, gone entirely to ruin and decay; electors, a Sovereign, and 12 Burgeses, all, of course, non-residents——Proprietor of the Soil and Patron, Lord Carysfort.

Blessington, 240 inhabitants, electors, a Portrieve, 2 Bailiffs, a Register and 12 Burgeses, with power in them to make freemen, which they do not exercise beyond four or five, and all these electors are non-residents, except one or two; a corrupt, venal and rotten borough, at the absolute command of——Patron, Lord Hillsborough.

F I N I S.

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